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ABSTRACT

The "Caring for Preschool Children" program was designed as a personalized training program to help adults working with preschool children acquire the skills and knowledge needed to provide a high quality preschool program. This two-volume training manual is comprised of 13 modules corresponding to the areas of the Child Development Associate Competency Standards, each containing an overview, self-assessments, learning activities, answer sheets, and a glossary. The modules are: (1) "Safe," preventing, and responding to accidents and injuries; (2) "Healthy," including promoting wellness and reducing the spread of disease, and helping children develop habits that promote good hygiene and nutrition; (3) "Learning Environment," encouraging play and exploration, and planning and implementing schedules, routines, and transitions that meet children's needs; (4) "Physical," providing materials, equipment, and opportunities for gross and fine motor development and encouraging physical fitness; (5) "Cognitive," encouraging children to explore and construct knowledge about their world, and helping children to develop confidence in their ability to think and solve problems; (6) "Communication," helping children use language meaningfully and providing materials and experiences that support emerging literacy skills; (7) "Creative," encouraging exploration and experimentation, offering materials and activities, and showing respect for children's ideas; (8) "Self," developing positive relationships with children and helping them accept and appreciate themselves and others; (9) "Social," helping children develop social skills, get along with others, and express their feelings; (10) "Guidance," encouraging self-discipline and using positive methods to guide children; (11) "Families," sharing information with parents about their child's experiences and development, supporting families, and offering several options for parent participation; (12) "Program Management," learning about each child, following policies and procedures, and teaming; and (13) "Professionalism," assessing one's performance and applying professional ethics. The trainer's guide provides a detailed description of the trainer's role in guiding teachers through the learning activities and includes

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suggestions for providing feedback and encouraging teachers to extend their learning. Answer sheets and observation forms for assessment, and tracking forms to record each teacher's progress are included. Chapter 1 of the guide discusses the need for an organized system for staff development, the components of a professional development system, and the importance of linking training to professional development and program improvement. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the training materials, content, and approach. Chapter 3 presents suggestions for managing the training programs, including completing an orientation and providing feedback. Chapter 4 discusses strategies for effective group training sessions. Section 5 presents information on assessing teachers' progress through the modules. Appendices contain forms for the trainers' use. (KDFB)

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Caring for
Preschool Children

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Volume I
Second Edition

Safe

Healthy

Learning Environment

Physical

Cognitive

Communication

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Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Ed.

A Competency-Based Training Program

Volume I

Diane Trister Dodge
Derry G. Koralek
Peter J. Pizzolongo

TEACHING
STRATEGIES

Washington, DC

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Acknowledgments

Caring for Preschool Children has a long history and therefore we have many individuals to acknowledge and thank. The primary basis for this publication is a training program developed by the authors for the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army Child Development Services Programs. Carolee Callen, then Head of the Navy Child Development Services Branch, originally conceived of the idea of a standardized, self-instructional training program for child care staff. In 1986 the Navy contracted with Creative Associates International, Inc., a Washington, DC-based consulting firm where the authors then worked, to develop a comprehensive training program. M.-A. Lucas, Chief of Child Development Services in the U.S. Army, funded an adaptation of the training program to support training in Army child development centers. We are indebted to these two individuals, their Headquarters staff, and the staff at Army and Navy child development centers who reviewed all drafts of the materials developed under this contract and provided us with constructive and helpful suggestions that greatly improved the program.

During the development of this training program, in its original format for military child care settings and as revised by Teaching Strategies in 1989, several early childhood educators worked with us and provided expert advice. In particular, we want to thank Dr. Jenni Klein, whose considerable knowledge and vast practical experience made her contributions exceptionally valuable. Dr. Joan Lombardi reviewed the training materials from the perspective of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Standards and showed us where changes and additions were needed. On individual modules, we are grateful for the contributions of Laura Colker, Marilyn Goldhammer, Dr. Trudy Hamby, Bonnie Kittredge, Cynthia Prather, and Lillian Sugarman.

Since 1989, *Caring for Preschool Children* has been implemented in early childhood programs across the country and used as the text for college courses. It served as the basis for two new sets of materials—*Caring for Children in Family Child Care* and *Caring for Children in School-Age Programs*. Our experiences in developing the new materials led us to the decision to update this original work and publish a second edition.

We are especially grateful to Emily Kohn who edited the manuscript; Debra Al-Salám who served as production manager; Jennifer Barrett O'Connell who created the art work for our new cover and the graphics in each module; Ayesha Khwaja Husain who designed the cover and layout of the book and also assisted with production; and to Larry Bram who kept us all on track.

And finally, we want to acknowledge the many early childhood educators we have worked with over the years from whom we have learned a great deal. We have undoubtedly adapted and expanded on many of their excellent ideas; this training program is richer as a result.

It is our hope that this second edition of *Caring for Preschool Children* will have a positive impact on the quality of early childhood programs by giving staff developers and teachers a practical and comprehensive tool to support their important work.

Orientation

Welcome to *Caring for Preschool Children*, a personalized training program designed to help you acquire the skills and knowledge you need to provide a high-quality program for preschool children. Whether you are new to the profession or have years of experience, this training program offers practical information on topics central to teaching preschool children. Throughout these materials we use the term *teacher* to mean any adult who works with young children in a classroom setting, including mentor teachers, lead teachers, teacher aides, teacher assistants, caregivers, and volunteers. We use the term *trainer* to refer to the individual who is guiding your participation in this training program.

Several features of *Caring for Preschool Children* make it unique.

- The materials are appropriate for new as well as experienced teachers.
- You take responsibility for your progress through the training program, with guidance and feedback provided by a trainer.
- The training program is individualized; you work independently, according to your own schedule, and at your own pace.
- The information presented in the modules is practical and of immediate use in your daily work with children.
- Many of the learning activities ask you to observe children to learn about their skills and interests. Observation is a key way to get to know children and to plan ways to respond to each child as an individual.
- Your completed learning activities become a professional resource and record of your growth and competence.

How the Training Program Can Help You

Caring for Preschool Children is designed to provide specialized training to help you achieve a high-quality preschool program. The modules in this training program describe the typical developmental stages of children ages three to five and include many examples of how you can apply this knowledge to plan and implement your program. The more you know about children, the more effective you can be in establishing a positive relationship with each child, a relationship that supports learning and skill development.

Working with young children is a rewarding profession, one in which you can constantly grow and feel challenged. As an adult, you bring years of experience to the task of teaching preschool children. Once you begin this training program, you will find you already have many skills addressed in the modules. Completing the modules will enable you to extend and expand on the skills and knowledge you already have. The training will help you to meet the profession's standards and to become a more competent teacher.

Caring for Preschool Children can help you achieve a nationally recognized credential that acknowledges your skills as a teacher of preschool children. The training program is based on the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards, as defined by The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition (The Council) in Washington, DC. There are 13 CDA functional areas that define the skills and knowledge of competent teachers. (See pages 7-8 for definitions of each functional area.) Each of the modules in *Caring for Preschool Children* addresses one of the functional areas. Teachers who demonstrate that they have acquired the skills and knowledge outlined in the CDA Competency Standards can apply for a credential from The Council. Contact the Council at 1-800-424-4310 for more information about the requirements for a CDA credential.

The Role of the Trainer

An important part of this training program is the feedback and support you receive from a trainer. The trainer might be a colleague, mentor teacher, supervisor, education coordinator, college instructor, or other individual who can observe you at work and provide meaningful feedback to encourage your professional development. Although the modules are designed to be self-instructional, you will benefit most if you have an experienced trainer who can review and discuss your responses to learning activities, answer questions, and comment on your interactions with children and families. A trainer can provide feedback on site at the program, during a phone conference, via electronic mail (e-mail), or in a group meeting.

How the Training Program Works

When you have completed this Orientation, your next step is to complete the self-assessment. This is not a test. It is designed to introduce the major topics covered in each module so you can meet with your trainer to develop a module completion plan. To complete this plan, you select three modules to work on first. Then you determine a tentative schedule for completing the entire training program.

To learn more about your current skills, ask your trainer to conduct several observations of you as you work with children. Observation is an important training tool. Trainers use observations to give you feedback on your progress in applying the skills and knowledge gained as you work on the modules. You and your trainer can review the observation notes and the results of the self-assessment as you develop your individualized module completion plan.

You might choose to begin with a module of particular interest precisely because you have already acquired many of the relevant skills. Or, you might begin with a module that addresses a training need identified through the self-assessment or your trainer's observations. If you are using this training program as a part of course or seminar, your trainer might ask you to begin with a specific module so that you can participate in group meetings with others who are working on the same module. A program director might ask teachers to begin with a module that addresses a program need, such as improving partnerships with parents.

You can expect to spend about four to six weeks on each module. Generally, it takes 12 to 18 months to complete the training program. For each module, you will follow a consistent sequence of steps. These steps are described in the following paragraphs.

Complete the overview.

The **overview** introduces the topics addressed in the module and defines three major skills teachers must have. For each skill, you review concrete examples depicting teachers demonstrating their competence and a short situation illustrating teachers applying their skills. You answer questions following each situation. The last section of the overview asks you to relate the topic to your own experiences.

Do the pre-training assessment.

The **pre-training assessment** is a list of the key skills competent teachers should possess in each area. You indicate whether you use a skill regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Review your responses on the pre-training assessment, then identify three to five skills to improve or topics you wish to learn more about. Before beginning the learning activities, you discuss the overview and the pre-training assessment with your trainer.

Complete each learning activity.

Each module has four to six **learning activities.** The activities begin with objectives—statements of what you will learn—and several pages of information about the topic. After completing the reading, you apply what you learned by answering questions; completing a checklist; trying out suggested practices; planning, implementing, and evaluating an activity; or observing children and using your notes to plan an individualized program. Directions for applying your knowledge are in shaded text. When you have completed each learning activity, you arrange a time to meet with your trainer to discuss the activity and to receive feedback. For some activities, you also meet with colleagues or a child's family to discuss what you did and what you learned.

Summarize your progress.

After you have completed all the learning activities in the module, you **summarize your progress** by reviewing the pre-training assessment and describing your increased knowledge and skills. You then meet with your trainer to discuss your progress and to determine whether you are ready to schedule your knowledge and competency assessments.

Complete the assessment process.

Your trainer will give you the **knowledge and competency assessments**. On the knowledge assessment, you must achieve a score of 80 percent before going on to a new module. For the competency assessment, your trainer observes you working with children to assess your competence in the functional area. Some competency assessments must take place at a specific time—for example, the competency assessment for Module 11, Families, should take place at drop-off or pick-up time, when parents are present. After you have completed both assessments you and your trainer discuss whether you have successfully completed the module. If you need to spend more time on the module, your trainer may suggest activities to help you gain the skills needed to demonstrate competence.

Before You Begin

Take a few minutes to review the glossary on the following page. It defines the terms used throughout the training program. The glossary is followed by the definitions of the CDA functional areas, a bibliography of suggested resources, and a list of publishers and distributors of resources. You may find the recommended resources in your program's library, or you may want to collect some for your own professional library. The self-assessment begins on page 17.

When you are ready, take the self-assessment and begin planning your training.

Glossary

Child development

All the stages a child passes through as he or she gains social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills.

Child Development Associate (CDA)

A person who has been assessed by The Council for Early Childhood Recognition (The Council) and judged to be a competent early childhood professional.

CDA Credentialing Program

The process used by The Council to assess the competence of early childhood professionals. Assessment and credentialing are based on performance in 13 functional areas. (See definition below.) The CDA credential is accepted by the early childhood profession nationwide.

Competencies

Those tasks, skills, attitudes, and values needed to provide a high-quality preschool program. Competencies differ from knowledge in that competencies describe a teacher's actions and performance.

Competency assessments

The performance-based section of the assessment process. For the competency assessments, teachers demonstrate their skills while working with children.

Developmentally appropriate practice

Program environment, activities, routines, and adult interactions with children that reflect children's individual characteristics and stages of social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Developmentally appropriate practice is age, individually, and culturally appropriate.

Environment

The indoor and outdoor space regularly available for the program. It includes furniture, materials, equipment, the schedule and routines followed, and the interactions of children and adults.

Functional areas

The 13 major categories of tasks or functions, as defined by The Council, that are used as the framework for this training program. Each module addresses a functional area in which a staff member must demonstrate competence in order to complete the training program.

Knowledge assessment

The paper-and-pencil exercises of the assessment process, testing knowledge of the concepts presented in the module.

Observation

The act of systematically watching and objectively taking notes on what a child says and does. Observation notes are used to learn more about a child in order to offer a program that reflects the child's current needs, strengths, and interests.

Pre-training assessment

A tool used at the beginning of each module by a teacher and a trainer to identify what skills the teacher has and where more training is needed.

Functional Areas of the Child Development Associate Competency Standards*

Safe

Provide a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries.

Healthy

Promote good health and nutrition and provide an environment that contributes to the prevention of illness.

Learning Environment

Use space, relationships, materials, and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, and learning.

Physical

Provide a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote the physical development of children.

Cognitive

Provide activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children.

Communication

Communicate with children and provide opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

Creative

Provide opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, space, and ideas in individual ways to express their creative abilities.

Self

Provide physical and emotional security for each child and help each child to know, accept, and take pride in himself or herself and to develop a sense of independence.

Social

Help each child to feel accepted in the group, help children learn to communicate and get along with others, and encourage feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.

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*The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, Washington, D.C.

Guidance

Provide a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group.

Families

Maintain an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encourage their involvement in the program, and support the child's relationship with his or her family.

Program Management

Use all available resources to ensure an effective operation.

Professionalism

Make decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, promote quality in child care services, and take advantage of opportunities to improve competence both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

Bibliography

It would be impossible to list all of the excellent resources for early childhood professionals. Here are some favorites—old and new. Except for the first category, which is relevant to all modules, the books are listed by the module they are most closely tied to; however, many could be listed in more than one category.

General

Ages and Stages, Karen Miller (Marshfield, MA: TelShare, 1985). This clearly written guide describes the stages children pass through as they develop physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Descriptions of children's behavior are accompanied by suggestions on ways teachers can respond so as to encourage growth and development.

The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd Ed., Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc. 1992). This comprehensive curriculum is appropriate for children in preschool and kindergarten. It offers practical strategies based on child development theory for setting the stage and promoting learning in ten interest areas: Blocks, House Corner, Table Toys, Art, Sand and Water, Library, Music and Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8, Sue Bredekamp, Ed. (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1987). This publication defines standards of quality in programs serving children up to age eight. Included are descriptions of strategies teachers can use to support growth and development.

Developmental Profiles: Pre-Birth Through Eight, 2nd Edition, K. Eileen Allen and Lynn Marotz (Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, Inc., 1994). Included in this helpful book are a discussion of child development principles and concepts and chapters devoted to each age group. The chapter on the preschooler provides separate developmental profiles and growth patterns for three-, four-, and five-year-old children.

Health and Safety

Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, American Public Health Association and American Academy of Pediatrics (Washington, DC and Elk Grove Village, IL 1992). This volume defines the standards and rationale for ensuring children's health and safety in child care programs.

Cup Cooking and Cup Cooking Starter Set, Barbara Johnson and Betty Plemons (Lake Alfred, FL: Early Educators Press, 1985). Children can prepare the single-serving recipes in this book with little assistance from adults. Simple illustrations explain the steps involved in measuring and mixing ingredients.

Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs, 1995 Edition, Abby Shapiro Kendrick, Roxane Kaufman, and Katherine P. Messenger, Eds. (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995). This comprehensive manual, includes three separate chapters devoted to maintaining a safe environment, promoting transportation safety, and handling emergencies.

Learning Through Cooking: A Cooking Program for Children Two to Ten, Nancy J. Ferreira (Palo Alto, CA: R & E Research Associates, 1982). This resource offers recipes, explains the skills and concepts learned through cooking, and includes sample forms for planning and evaluating cooking projects.

Model Child Care Health Policies, Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1993). These model policies provide an excellent starting point for writing health policies. The policies are available on a computer disk so that programs can adapt and reproduce them.

ABCs of Safe and Healthy Child Care, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, and Centers for Disease Control (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control, 1996). Formerly titled, *What You Should Know About Contagious Diseases in Day Care Settings*, this publication contains a practical and descriptive listing of all major childhood illnesses, how they are spread, and measures for prevention.

Learning Environment

Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments That Work, Jim Greenman (Redmond, WA: Exchange Press Inc., 1988). This book shows how to set up environments that make creative use of space and respond to children's developmental needs. It is richly illustrated with photographs of children using indoor and outdoor spaces.

Hug a Tree, Robert E. Rockwell, Elizabeth A. Sherwood, and Robert A. Williams (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1983). Readers of this book will learn to make use of the outdoor environment in a variety of ways. Each outdoor learning experience has a suggested age level, a clear description of the activity, and suggestions for follow-up learning.

The Outside Play and Learning Book, Karen Miller (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1989). A comprehensive and creative collection of outdoor activities, this book offers practical suggestions for making good use of the outdoor environment in all seasons.

Places and Spaces for Preschool and Primary (Indoors) and *Places and Spaces for Preschool and Primary (Outdoors)*, J. Vergeront (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988). These two books include sketches and patterns for building safe and creative play structures.

Play and Playscapes, Joe L. Frost (Albany, NY: Delmar Press, 1992). The author provides detailed descriptions of a variety of equipment found on playgrounds and explains how to create exciting outdoor environments for young children.

The Right Stuff for Children Birth to 8: Selecting Play Materials to Support Development, Martha B. Bronson (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988). This book is a thorough guide to appropriate play materials. The chapter for preschool and kindergarten children describes typical developmental characteristics and suggests materials to encourage different kinds of activities.

Physical

Easy Woodstuff for Kids, David Thompson (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1981). This woodworking primer shows how children can be creative using sticks, branches, and wood leftovers and scraps. The book includes detailed instructions for each project.

Feeling Strong, Feeling Free: Movement Exploration for Young Children, Molly Sullivan (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1982). This author presents a step-by-step approach to planning movement activities for children up to age eight. She describes the value of movement experiences and how to plan and introduce them to children.

Kid Fitness, Kenneth H. Cooper, M.D., M.P.H. (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1991). This book focuses on the physical development of children. It includes tips for encouraging children to participate in appropriate fitness activities and follow diets based on good nutrition. Although written for parents, there is much useful information for teachers.

Cognitive

The Complete Block Book, Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr., and Arlene Brett (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1983). This beautifully illustrated book combines the history of blocks with theory and ideas for practical use with children. It includes many photographs of children using blocks.

The Block Book, E. S. Hirsch, Ed. Revised Edition (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1996). Newly revised, this illustrated classic describes how and what children can learn using blocks—math concepts, science, social studies, self-awareness, and more.

Earthways, Simple Environmental Activities for Young Children, Carol Petrash (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1992). Most of the activities presented in this book make use of materials found in nature. Children can learn to understand and value the plants and animals that share their world.

Mudpies to Magnets: A Preschool Science Curriculum and *More Mudpies to Magnets*, Robert A. Williams, Robert E. Rockwell, and Elizabeth A. Sherwood (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1987 and 1990). Each book describes numerous hands-on science experiments for young children, including clear directions and materials needed.

Scaffolding Children's Learning: Vygotsky and Early Childhood Education, Laura E. Berk and Adam Winsler (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995). This book will be of interest to experienced teachers who want to learn more about Vygotsky's views on child development and how to apply them with children in their classrooms.

Young Children and Computers, Charles Hohmann (Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1990). This book describes developmentally appropriate ways to introduce computers in a preschool classroom. Included are guidelines for selecting software, setting up a computer area, and incorporating computers in the curriculum.

Creative

Dribble-Drabble, Art Experiences for Young Children, Deya Brashears (Fort Collins, CO: DMC Publications, 1985). This is a collection of art activities and recipes appropriate for preschool children.

Growing Up Creative, Teresa Amabile (New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 1989). Written for parents, this book explains Amabile's theories about creativity and offers strategies for encouraging children's creativity.

Kids Create, Laurie Carlson (Charlotte, VT: Williamson Publishing, 1990). This book describes art and craft projects for children ages three through nine. It provides illustrated instructions for a wide variety of activities that allow children to exercise their creativity.

Make Mine Music, Tom Walther (Boston, MA: Little Brown, and Company, 1981). This resource presents the view that everyone can make music. It includes ideas for making musical instruments from materials commonly found in our everyday environment.

Mudworks, Creative Clay, Dough, and Modeling Experiences, Mary Ann Kohl (Bellingham, WA: Bright Ring Publishing, 1989). There are over 100 open-ended ways to engage children in modeling experiences described in this book. The clearly written recipes are presented in a format that gives appropriate guidance to adults.

Please Don't Move the Muffin Tins: A Hands-Off Guide to Art for the Young Child, Bev Bos (Roseville, CA: Turn-the-Page Press, 1984). This is a wonderful collection of developmentally appropriate art experiences for young children.

Preschool Art, It's the Process, Not the Product!, Mary Ann Kohl (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1994). As the title suggests, this book offers a selection of open-ended art activities that allow children to fully experience the process of creating something rather than the product itself.

Communication

Emerging Literacy, Dorothy S. Strickland and Lesley Mandel Morrow, Eds. (Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1989). Each of the 12 chapters in this book was written by a different expert on children's literacy development. Learning literacy is presented as a continuous process that begins when parents and providers expose infants to oral and written language and continues throughout childhood.

Literacy Learning in the Early Years, Linda Gibson (New York: Teachers College Press, 1989). This author is a teacher-researcher who combines a theoretical perspective with examples from observations of teachers and children. Learning to read and write is viewed as an ongoing process that begins in infancy. The book's four parts are organized according to age level.

More Than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing, Judith A. Schickendanz (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1986). A practical book filled with ideas for organizing the environment so that children experience reading and writing as a meaningful part of their lives.

Story S-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-r-s: Activities to Expand Children's Favorite Books and *More Story S-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-r-s*, Shirley C. Raines and Robert J. Canady (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1989 and 1991). Filled with activities providers can use to extend children's enjoyment of their favorite books. Five active learning experiences are described for each of 90 books.

Young Children and Picture Books: Literature from Infancy to Six, M.R. Jalongo (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988). An excellent book for teachers on what constitutes high-quality literature and art for young children and how children benefit from good books.

Self, Social, and Guidance

Alike and Different: Exploring Our Humanity with Young Children, Bonnie Neugebauer, Ed. (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1992). The articles collected in this book offer thoughtful advice and approaches to meeting the needs of all children. Also addressed are diversity issues related to staffing, living in a changing world, and resources.

Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children, Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1989). This book contains many practical suggestions for helping adults understand how we unintentionally convey biases to children and how to minimize, deal with, and even eliminate those biases.

Beyond Self-Esteem: Developing a Genuine Sense of Human Value, Nancy E. Curry and C. N. Johnson (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1990). Part I of this book describes how children of different ages develop a sense of self and self-esteem. Part II presents strategies for encouraging children to develop strong, positive identities.

Common Sense Discipline, Grace Mitchell and Lois Dewsnap (Marshfield, MA: TelShare Publishing, 1995). Through real-life stories about children, this book demonstrates a developmentally appropriate approach to guidance. The authors look for the reasons for certain behaviors and suggest individualized strategies parents and teachers can use to promote self-discipline.

Early Violence Prevention, Tools for Teachers of Young Children, Ronald G. Slaby, Wendy C. Roedell, Diana Arezzo, and Kate Hendrix (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995). This book combines research results with teaching guidelines to help prevent violent behaviors in young children. It presents techniques for helping children understand their feelings and provides alternatives to aggression, such as conflict resolution.

First Feelings, Milestones in the Emotional Development of Your Baby and Child, Stanley Greenspan (New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1985). Dr. Greenspan, child psychiatrist and author, reviews the stages of normal emotional development for children. He offers suggestions for parents on how to handle typical problems and challenges. Teachers can adapt these strategies in their work with young children.

Greater Expectations: Overcoming the Culture of Indulgence in America's Homes and Schools, William Damon (New York: The Free Press, 1995). Written in response to what the author believes has been an overemphasis on misguided efforts to promote self-esteem, Damon advocates providing children with meaningful challenges, moral guidance, and opportunities to serve others. He stresses the importance of the quality of interactions between adults and children.

Parents, Please Don't Sit on the Kids, Clare Cherry (Belmont, CA: David S. Lake Publishers, 1985). The author offers practical suggestions for guiding children's behavior. She explains why some techniques work with young children and others do not.

Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs, Stacy York (Minneapolis: Redleaf Press, 1991). This resource defines a framework for multicultural education and shows how it is related to quality early childhood programs. The author defines the stages through which children pass as they become aware of differences and develop prejudices. She discusses the effects of prejudice on young children from diverse cultures.

Starting School: From Separation to Independence, Nancy Balaban (New York: Teachers College Press, 1985). This book explains how children experience and cope with separation and provides practical suggestions for supporting children and families in the child care setting.

Teaching Young Children in Violent Times: Building a Peaceable Classroom, Diane E. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility, 1994). This very practical resource is filled with ideas for creating classrooms where preschool through third grade children can learn peaceful alternatives to the violent behaviors they see in the media and in real life.

Your Child's Self-Esteem, Dorothy Corkille Briggs (Garden City, NY: Dolphin Books, 1975). This early childhood classic focuses on the importance of self-image, how it develops, and how adults can support children's self-esteem.

Families

A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Education, Diane Trister Dodge and Joanna Phinney (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1990). Written for parents and available in English, Spanish, and Chinese, this booklet can help teachers explain to families how children learn through developmentally appropriate preschool experiences.

Teacher-Parent Relationships, Jeannette Galambos-Stone (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1987). This book provides useful strategies for building relationships between teachers and families. The author describes how the relationship grows and changes over time and discusses how to handle common problems in supportive ways.

Program Management

The Crisis Manual for Early Childhood Teachers, Karen Miller (Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 1995). This comprehensive resource begins by defining the role of teachers in responding to crises that affect children and families. Subsequent chapters describe resources and strategies for specific types of crisis. The final section addresses how teachers can plan a curriculum that can respond to crises.

Emergent Curriculum, Elizabeth Jones and John Nimmo (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1994). This book illustrates the curriculum planning process by telling the story of a year in an early childhood classroom. Using this approach, the authors create a vivid picture of teachers planning a program that reflects individual and developmental goals for children.

Observing the Development of the Young Child, Janice J. Beaty (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1986). This book focuses on observing six major aspects of development—social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and creative—in children ages two through six. It includes a skills checklist with specific behaviors that teachers can observe.

Observing and Recording the Behavior of Young Children, 3rd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1983). Observing is the key to understanding individual children and planning ways to respond. This classic provides an excellent introduction to the purposes and techniques of observing children in all areas of development.

A Place for Me: Including Children with Special Needs in Early Childhood Programs, P. Chandler (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1994). This book allows teachers to acknowledge and address their feelings about the challenges of caring for children with special needs. The book also provides practical ideas for working with parents, preparing the environment, and helping all children appreciate themselves and others.

The Portfolio and Its Use: Developmentally Appropriate Assessment of Young Children, Cathy Grace and Elizabeth F. Shores (Little Rock: Southern Association on Children Under Six, 1992). This book discusses why portfolios are a developmentally appropriate method for assessing young children's progress, defines the contents of a typical portfolio, and explains how portfolios can be used for evaluation and for communication with families.

Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach, Lilian G. Katz and Sylvia C. Chard (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1989). This overview of the project approach—a teaching technique that encourages children to conduct an in-depth study of a specific topic—will help teachers address children's skills, backgrounds, and interests in the planning process.

Reaching Potentials: Appropriate Curriculum and Assessment for Young Children, Volume I, Sue Bredekamp, Ed. (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1992). This volume presents the NAEYC curriculum and assessment guidelines and discusses how to use them in screening and assessment and for curriculum planning. Separate chapters describe strategies for helping children with special needs, minority children, and linguistically diverse children reach their potential.

Professionalism

A to Z: The Early Childhood Educator's Guide to the Internet, ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1996). This guide was written for early childhood professionals to explain the benefits of using the Internet to share ideas, solve problems, and learn about resources on working with children and families. Readers learn how to use Internet mail groups and sites for early childhood educators and how to use ERIC on the Internet.

Beginner's Bibliography—1994, Carol Copple, Ed. (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1994). This is an annotated list of recommended resources for teachers of young children.

Ethical Behavior in Early Childhood Education, Expanded Edition, Lilian G. Katz and Evangeline H. Ward (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1991). This book includes descriptions of dilemmas faced by teachers and the NAEYC Code of Ethics. Teachers can use the situations described to start discussions about how to handle difficult situations at their programs.

Speaking Out: Early Childhood Advocacy, Stacie G. Goffin and Joan Lombardi (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988). This resource helps demystify advocacy by providing practical ideas and examples of ways to influence policies for children, families, and professionals who work with children.

Publishers and Distributors of Resources

The following organizations are publishers and distributors of resources for early childhood professionals. Write or call to receive copies of their most recent catalogs.

Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), 11501 Georgia Avenue, Suite 315, Wheaton, MD 20902, (1-800-423-3563). ACEI offers resources and support for meeting the developmental needs of children from infancy through early adolescence.

Bank Street Bookstore, Bank Street College of Education, 610 West 112th Street, New York, NY 10025 (1-800-724-1486). Through its catalog, the college bookstore offers a broad selection of materials, organized by curriculum themes that are appropriate for young children.

Creative Education Surplus, 1000 Apollo Road, Eagen, MN 55121 (1-800-886-6428). This is a good source for a wide variety of surplus items children can use for crafts and other projects.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801-4897 (1-800-583-4135). ERIC provides information on the development, care, and education of children birth through early adolescence through database, information services, publications, and the Internet.

Gryphon House, P. O. Box 207, Beltsville, MD 20704-0207 (1-800-638-0928). This company publishes and distributes resources for child care professionals and books for young children.

Kaplan Companies, 1310 Lewis Clemmons Road, Lewisville, NC 27023 (1-800-452-7526). This company distributes equipment, supplies, and print and audiovisual resources for early childhood professionals.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 1509 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1426 (1-800-424-2460). NAEYC publishes numerous reasonably-priced resources on topics of interest to teachers. If you join NAEYC, you will receive their journal, *Young Children*, which has a wealth of articles on caring for children ages birth through eight.

Redleaf Press, Resources for Child Caring, 450 North Syndicate, Suite 5, St. Paul, MN 55104-4125 (1-800-423-8309). This organization offers a wide variety of resources on general and specific child care topics.

Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027 (1-800-575-6566). This press publishes and distributes books, videos, and assessment tools for early childhood professionals.

Teaching Strategies, Inc., P.O. Box 42243, Washington, DC 20015 (1-800-637-3652). Teaching Strategies publishes this book as well as a complete range of curriculum and training materials for programs serving children from birth through middle childhood.

Self-Assessment

Competencies	I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Safe				
a. Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries		☐	☐	☐
b. Planning for and responding to accidents and injuries		☐	☐	☐
c. Helping children develop habits that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries		☐	☐	☐
2. Healthy				
a. Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that promote wellness and reduce the spread of disease		☐	☐	☐
b. Helping children develop habits that promote good hygiene and nutrition		☐	☐	☐
c. Recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect		☐	☐	☐
3. Learning Environment				
a. Organizing indoor and outdoor areas that encourage play and exploration		☐	☐	☐
b. Selecting and attractively displaying materials and equipment		☐	☐	☐
c. Planning and implementing a schedule, routines, and transitions that meet children's needs		☐	☐	☐

Competencies	**I Do This**	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
4. Physical				
a. Providing materials, equipment, and opportunities for gross motor development		☐	☐	☐
b. Providing materials and opportunities for fine motor development		☐	☐	☐
c. Reinforcing and encouraging children's physical fitness		☐	☐	☐
5. Cognitive				
a. Creating an environment that encourages children to explore and discover		☐	☐	☐
b. Interacting with children in ways that help them develop confidence in their ability to think and solve problems		☐	☐	☐
c. Providing opportunities for children to construct knowledge about their world		☐	☐	☐
6. Communication				
a. Encouraging children to listen and speak		☐	☐	☐
b. Helping children use language in meaningful ways		☐	☐	☐
c. Providing materials and experiences that support emerging literacy skills		☐	☐	☐

Competencies

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
7. Creative			
a. Arranging the environment to encourage exploration and experimentation	☐	☐	☐
b. Offering a variety of materials and activities that promote self-expression	☐	☐	☐
c. Interacting with children in ways that encourage and and respect original ideas and expressions	☐	☐	☐
8. Self			
a. Developing a positive and supportive relationship with each child	☐	☐	☐
b. Helping children accept and appreciate themselves and others	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing opportunities for children to be successful and feel competent	☐	☐	☐
9. Social			
a. Helping children learn to get along with others	☐	☐	☐
b. Helping children understand and express their feelings and respect those of others	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing an environment and experiences that help children develop social skills	☐	☐	☐

Competencies	**I Do This: Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
10. Guidance			
a. Providing an environment that encourages self-discipline	☐	☐	☐
b. Using positive methods to guide individual children	☐	☐	☐
c. Helping children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways	☐	☐	☐
11. Families			
a. Communicating frequently with parents to share information about their child's experiences and development	☐	☐	☐
b. Offering a variety of ways for parents to participate in their child's life at the program	☐	☐	☐
c. Providing support to families	☐	☐	☐
12. Program Management			
a. Learning about each child's culture, language, family, skills, needs, and interests	☐	☐	☐
b. Working as a team to offer an individualized program	☐	☐	☐
c. Following administrative policies and procedures	☐	☐	☐

Competencies	I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
13. Professionalism				
a. Continually assessing your own performance		☐	☐	☐
b. Continuing to learn about caring for children		☐	☐	☐
c. Applying professional ethics at all times		☐	☐	☐

Module Completion Plan

Review your responses to the self-assessment with your trainer. What do you feel are your strengths, interests, and needs? Decide which areas you would like to work on first. Select three modules to begin with and set target dates for their completion. Your trainer can let you know how much work is involved for each module. Record the module titles and target completion dates below. You may also wish to determine a tentative schedule for completing *Caring for Preschool Children*.

Module	**Target Completion Date**

Tentative schedule for completion of the *Caring for Preschool Children* Training Program:

Module	**Date**

Teacher ______ Date ______ Trainer ______ Date ______

Module 1: ***Safe***

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Overview

Keeping children safe involves:

- Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries
- Planning for and responding to accidents and injuries
- Helping children develop habits that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries

Adults and children feel safe when they are in control.

Adults feel safe when they are in control of situations. Knowing how to prevent accidents and injuries and what to do if accidents and injuries occur helps adults feel in control.

To feel safe, children must trust adults to see that no harm comes to them, and to know what to do when accidents occur. As children become more independent, they learn that they can take steps to control their environment. As a result, they are better able to explore their world safely.

Preschool children often take risks.

Risk-taking is common among preschoolers who have learned to trust their environment. Their sense of independence and initiative makes them eager to participate in activities without direct adult supervision. Many preschool children try to challenge themselves, their parents, and their teachers. Because risk-taking may lead to accidents, children need help to pursue these challenges safely. Accidents are the leading cause of death among children. However, national studies indicate that 95 percent of these accidents are preventable.

Teachers are responsible for protecting children.

As a teacher, you have a professional responsibility to keep children safe. As stated in the Code of Ethical Conduct of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (Principle 1.1):[1]

> Above all we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitive, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to children.

There are three ways in which teachers can help keep children safe. First, you can create and maintain classroom and outdoor areas that are free from conditions that might cause accidents or injuries. These play spaces should provide structure and clear limits so active preschoolers can safely explore and take risks. Secondly, you can—and should—become familiar with your program's established procedures to ensure children's safety on a daily basis and during emergencies. When you follow these procedures in a calm manner during drills and actual emergencies, you help children learn how to keep themselves safe. Third, as you guide children to be self-disciplined individuals who can solve problems and think ahead, you help them develop habits that promote their own safety. For example, they learn how to use materials and equipment safely and anticipate what might happen if they don't.

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[1] Stephanie Feeney and Kenneth Kipnis. *Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1990, p.5.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in keeping children safe. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Reduce and Prevent Accidents and Injuries

Check indoor and outdoor areas daily and remove any hazardous materials.

Follow recommended adult-child ratios of 1:8 for a group of 16 or 1:9 for a group of 18 preschoolers.

Check daily to see that all electrical outlets are covered and electrical cords are placed away from water, traffic paths, and children's reach.

Check materials and equipment daily for broken parts, loose bolts, or jagged edges; make sure that imperfect materials and equipment are repaired or replaced.

Arrange the room so that there are no long or open spaces that tempt children to run and so that there are clear fire exits.

Check safety equipment monthly to ensure it is in an easy-to-reach place and in good condition.

Work with colleagues to supervise all children at all times.

Ms. Kim notices three-year-old Jill across the room climbing on a box. It is sagging with her weight. "Ms. Richards," Ms. Kim says, alerting the teacher on that side of the room. Quickly, Ms. Richards moves to Jill's side. "Jill," she says, calmly, "I'm going to help you climb down off that box. It isn't a safe place for climbing, because it isn't strong enough to hold you. I am going to put this box away so children won't climb on it. Do you want to help me?" Jill and Ms. Richards carry the box to the closet. "Thank you for helping make our room safer," says Ms. Richards. "Now, would you like to climb on the climber? It's a good place for climbing."

1. **How did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards work together to make the program safer?**

2. **What do you think Jill learned from this experience?**

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Responding to Accidents and Emergencies

Develop and post accident and emergency procedures.

Make sure the telephone is easy to reach and is working properly.

Know where to find parents' emergency telephone numbers.

Respond quickly and calmly to children in distress.

Maintain current emergency information on all children.

Know and follow established procedures for leading children to safety during fire and other hazard drills and in real emergencies.

Mr. Lopez and his group of four-year-olds are walking into the building when Andy trips and scrapes his knee. "You scraped your knee a little," explains Mr. Lopez as he helps Andy to his feet. When they get back to the room, Mr. Lopez takes Andy to the office while Ms. Thomas and a volunteer stay with the other children. They get the first-aid kit off the shelf. Mr. Lopez opens the kit and reviews the chart taped to the inside lid that describes how to treat minor injuries. Mr. Lopez puts on latex gloves, then washes Andy's knee with soap and water. Andy winces. "You're being brave," says Mr. Lopez. "I know this stings a bit, but your knee needs to be clean so it will heal." At Andy's request, he puts a bandage on the scrape. Andy helps stick it in place. Finally, Mr. Lopez takes Andy back to the room. "You're all set and ready to play again," he says. He fills out an accident report form and writes a note on the daily chart so at the end of the day he will remember to tell Andy's parents to read and sign the accident report.

1. **How did Mr. Lopez know what to do?**

2. **What did Mr. Lopez do to reassure Andy?**

Helping Children Develop Safe Habits

Take safety precautions in a calm and reassuring manner without overprotecting children or making them fearful.	"Carlos, the pecan shells are splintering when you smash them and might hurt someone. Use the hammer for wood."
Convey to children in actions and words that the program is a safe place and that they will be protected.	"Judson, I'll stand next to the slide if that will help you feel better about going down."
Involve children in making safety rules for indoor and outdoor equipment, materials, and activities.	"Before we use our new loft we need to make some rules for climbing and jumping safely."
Remind children of safety rules and emergency procedures using diagrams, pictures, and words.	"Hold your funnel over the water table so the water doesn't spill. Someone might slip and fall if the floor gets wet."
Demonstrate proper ways to use potentially dangerous materials and equipment.	"I'm cutting with a sharp knife, so I make sure my other hand is away from the blade."
Teach children how to observe safety when taking neighborhood walks and field trips.	"Let's make sure everyone has a partner and knows which group they are in for our trip."
Use positive guidance techniques to respond immediately when children are involved in unsafe activities.	"It hurts Teresa when you drive into her ankles. If you want to pass, ask her to please move onto the grass."
Point out potential hazards so children will learn how to prevent accidents.	"Roxanne, please help me trim the loose strings on the edge of this rug so nobody gets a foot caught and trips."

Five-year-old Kirsten builds a structure as high as her head. "I want to build my house bigger than I am," she says to the other children in the block area. Ms. Williams hears Kirsten's announcement and walks to the block area. "None of the children have built a building taller than they are, yet, Kirsten. Let's talk about how to do that safely," she says. "It's only a problem if someone knocks it and it falls," says Kirsten. "I know!" volunteers Amanda, "Take some tape and make a circle around the building so no one gets too close. Then it won't fall." "Good problem solving," says Ms. Williams. "You'll have to let the other children know." They decide that they need to write a "Safety in the Block Area" chart, with pictures and words, so all will know the guidelines. Kristen says, "We can talk about what to put on our safety chart at group time today."

1. **How did Ms. Williams let the children know that the program is a safe place?**

2. **How were the children learning to keep themselves safe?**

Your Own Need for Safety

Feeling safe is a basic human need.

Everyone needs to feel safe. When we know that we are protected from harm, we can function well. Safe environments make us feel secure, relaxed, confident, and able to enjoy ourselves. When we do not feel protected, we may be fearful and anxious.

The increasing violence in many communities today, especially random, unpredictable violence makes many of us feel unsafe. Children have the same fears as adults. They see violence on television and too often experience it in their homes and neighborhoods. Safety is an important issue for everyone.

When you are in charge of your environment, you can make it a safer one. You probably have experienced times when you were doing something that was potentially dangerous, and you did things to make that activity safer. Do you remember times when you:

- climbed a ladder while someone held it to keep it stable;
- parked your car at night in a well-lit area of the shopping mall; or
- carefully unplugged a lamp with a frayed cord and had the wiring replaced?

Learning about safety begins in childhood.

You have learned about safety through experience. When you were a child, the important adults in your life may have controlled your environment to keep it safe and helped you develop habits concerning safety. As you grew older, you learned what you could do to minimize dangerous situations.

Think of a situation where you didn't feel safe and describe it below.

What could you have done to reduce or prevent an accident or injury?

What can you learn from this experience that will help you keep children safe?

As you work through this module you will learn how to set up and maintain a safe environment. Safety is important in all aspects of your work with young children—whether you are guiding learning, encouraging creativity, or promoting self-discipline. Keeping children safe is one of your most important responsibilities.

When you have finished this overview section, complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions of the terms used.

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to make sure children are safe. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Reduce and Prevent Accidents and Injuries

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Check indoor and outdoor areas daily and remove any hazardous materials.	☐	☐	☐
2. Follow required recommended adult-child ratios of 1:8 for a group of 16 or 1:9 for a group of 18 preschoolers.	☐	☐	☐
3. Check daily to see that all electrical outlets are covered and electrical cords are placed away from water, traffic paths, and children's reach.	☐	☐	☐
4. Check materials and equipment daily for broken parts, loose bolts, or jagged edges and make sure they are repaired or replaced.	☐	☐	☐
5. Arrange the room so that there are no long or open spaces that tempt children to run and so that there are clear fire exits.	☐	☐	☐
6. Check safety equipment monthly to ensure it is in an easy-to-reach place and in good condition.	☐	☐	☐
7. Work with colleagues to supervise all children at all times.	☐	☐	☐
8. Develop and post accident and emergency procedures.	☐	☐	☐

Responding To Accidents and Emergencies

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
9. Make sure the telephone is easy to reach and is working properly.	☐	☐	☐
10. Know where to find parents' emergency telephone numbers.	☐	☐	☐
11. Respond quickly and calmly to children in distress.	☐	☐	☐
12. Maintain current emergency information on all children.	☐	☐	☐
13. Know and follow established procedures for leading children to safety during a fire and other hazard drills and in real emergencies.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Develop Safe Habits

14. Take safety precautions in a calm and reassuring manner without overprotecting children to make them fearful.	☐	☐	☐
15. Convey to children in actions and words that the program is a safe place and that they will be protected.	☐	☐	☐
16. Involve children in making safety rules for indoor and outdoor equipment, materials, and activities.	☐	☐	☐
17. Remind children of safety rules and emergency procedures using diagrams, pictures, and words.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Develop Safe Habits

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
18. Demonstrate proper ways to use potentially dangerous materials and equipment.	☐	☐	☐
19. Teach children how to observe safety rules when taking neighborhood walks and field trips.	☐	☐	☐
20. Use positive guidance techniques to respond immediately when children are involved in unsafe activities.	☐	☐	☐
21. Point out potential hazards so children will learn how to prevent accidents.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

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Begin the learning activities for Module 1, Safe.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical behaviors of preschool children
- Use what you know about children to keep them safe

Teachers can help children learn how to take risks safely.

Almost every new activity has an element of risk, and almost every risk can be minimized through preparation and anticipation of potential hazards. Early childhood teachers have dual, and sometimes conflicting, responsibilities to children. They must keep them safe while also providing challenges that encourage development of cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical skills. Whether selecting materials, arranging the environment, guiding learning, or responding to accidents and injuries, teachers must think of ways to encourage children to take risks, while at the same time showing them how to do so safely. To carry out these responsibilities successfully, teachers think about what preschool children are like, what they can do, and what skills they are still developing.

You can prevent accidents through supervision and regular safety checks.

You can expect preschoolers to run, climb, and jump whenever they have a chance to do so. Sometimes they will perform these actions on a dare: "Who can jump farthest . . . run fastest . . . climb highest?" To prevent accidents, you and your colleagues need to work together to make sure that active play areas are continually supervised. Daily and monthly safety checks will help you maintain an uncluttered environment, free from potentially dangerous items, and with plenty of room for children to move their bodies. In addition, children will be less likely to run inside, jump off tables, or climb on shelves when the daily schedule offers time for active play, both indoors and out.

Tired children are more likely to have accidents.

Most preschoolers enjoy playing and working with others. However, social interactions take a lot of energy, especially for the younger preschoolers who may have little experience with group life. Accidents tend to happen when children are tired from active play, long activities, or from being in a large group or a noisy room. You can arrange the day's activities to keep children from becoming too tired. Alternate vigorous activities with more quiet ones. When you see that a child seems weary, suggest a quiet play activity so the child can recoup lost energy.

Select materials with children's safety in mind.

Preschool children show a lot of initiative—they are curious learners who are trying to make sense of their world. To find out how things work, children take objects apart and put them back together; they may use materials in ways other than intended. Look for toys and other materials that are well-constructed and durable enough to withstand children's play and explorations.

Preschoolers can use their thinking skills to learn safe ways to play.

Preschoolers can make plans and think before acting, but frequently forget to do so. Although they are beginning to understand cause and effect, they may not consider what might happen if they ride a tricycle too fast, climb up the slide, or splash water on the floor under the sink. Teachers can help children think about keeping themselves safe by asking them to help make safety rules; offering frequent and positive reminders of rules and limits; and asking questions that help children understand how accidents happen: "What might happen if . . .?" "Why do you think you fell . . .?" "What can we do . . . ?"

Some other strategies for encouraging preschool children to think about taking risks safely include the following.

- Stand near the equipment children are using and praise the children's safe actions. "Tricia, you remembered how to stay safe. You looked to make sure nobody was in the way and you said, 'I'm going to jump.'"
- Provide constant, close supervision over active games and for activities such as cooking and woodworking that involve use of potentially hazardous equipment.
- Participate with the children, not in conversations with other teachers.
- Step in quickly to turn unsafe practices into safe ones: "Use the step stool, not the table." "Hold the knife by the handle, not the blade."

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next page lists some typical behaviors of children in the preschool years, ages three to five. Included are behaviors relevant to children's safety. The right column asks you to identify ways that teachers can use this information about child development to keep children safe. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module you will learn new strategies for keeping children safe, and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at one time. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of the module. By the time you complete all the learning activities, you will find that you have learned many ways to keep children safe.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Safe**
They have lots of energy and run, hop, and jump.	*Set up the indoor and outdoor areas so children can move freely without bumping into each other or the furniture and equipment. Limit running to the outdoor area or a supervised hallway and offer frequent, positive reminders: "Walk inside". Provide energy outlets indoors such as a climber or a movement activity.*
They may have accidents when they are tired or over-excited.	
They ride tricycles and other moving equipment.	
They slide, swing, and climb on equipment.	
They throw, kick, and catch objects.	

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Safe
They can use tools such as knives, scissors, and woodworking equipment.	
They perform toileting routines independently.	
They begin to understand cause and effect.	
They like to take risks and face challenges.	
They poke, handle, and squeeze objects to discover what they are and what they can do.	

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When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of how teachers keep children safe.

II. Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment

In this activity you will learn to:

- Set up indoor and outdoor environments that are safe for preschool children
- Use daily and monthly safety checklists to identify potential hazards in the indoor and outdoor areas

Creating a safe environment can prevent accidents.

One of the most effective ways to keep children safe is to provide a safe environment. Your choice of toys, materials, and equipment and the way you arrange your space can prevent and reduce accidents and injuries.

In setting up a safe environment, you must be prepared for the unexpected. Because children don't always think ahead and see the consequences of their actions, you have to do it for them as you set up your space.

Know the guidelines for keeping children safe.

Providing sufficient space for children's play and activities is clearly the first step in providing a safe environment. *The National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs,*[2] suggests a minimum of 35 square feet per child that is free of furniture and equipment. This usually translates to a minimum of 50 square feet per child, measured wall-to-wall, not including space dedicated to sick child care, offices, staff rooms, halls, the kitchen, and so on. Some of the other safety requirements found in *The Guidelines* include the following.

- Closets that are accessible to children must have an internal release mechanism that can be opened by a child inside the closet.
- Bathroom doors should be fitted with hardware so that the doors can be opened from both inside and outside.
- Strings or cords on window shades or blinds that are within children's reach must be less than six inches in length to prevent strangulation.
- Plastic bags and Styrofoam must be stored out of children's reach to prevent choking and suffocation.
- Carpeting should be clean, in good repair, nonflammable, and nontoxic.
- Furniture used by children should be durable and child-sized.

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[2] *National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*, a joint collaborative project of the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, supported by Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, published by National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, Arlington, VA, 1992.

- A-B-C type fire extinguishers should be clearly visible. Instructions for use should be posted on the unit or nearby. All staff should learn how to use the extinguishers.
- Properly functioning smoke detectors should be installed 6 to 12 inches below the ceiling and 40 feet apart; batteries must be less than one year old.
- Exits and escape paths should be easy to see and free from any items that obstruct traffic.
- Steps and footstools should be nonslip, with steps no higher than the user's knee.
- Teachers should assume that all plants are potentially poisonous and place them out of children's reach. They should contact the poison control center to learn whether a specific plant is poisonous.

Ask your supervisor for information on your program's guidelines for environmental safety and the licensing requirements that your program must meet. Many of these requirements are designed to keep preschoolers safe.

Consider these tips for making indoor interest areas and activities safe.

When setting up the interest areas in your room, use low dividers or shelves so you and your colleagues can easily see all children at all times. Display and store materials on low, open shelves, not in chests with heavy lids that can fall on children. Place heavy toys on bottom shelves so children won't pull down heavy items on themselves. Make sure each area has enough room for children to engage in the kinds of activities that take place there. Create clear traffic paths so children don't get in each other's way. Provide a sufficient quantity of safe, developmentally appropriate play materials so children do not have to wait for a long time to use desired items. Regularly examine toys, furniture, and equipment to make sure they are:

- sturdy
- in good repair (no loose parts or chipped paint)
- nonflammable
- nontoxic
- free of sharp edges, points, corners, and splinters
- unbreakable
- free of paint containing lead or other poisonous materials
- hypo-allergenic
- free of small removable parts (with diameters less than 1-1/4 inches) that children might swallow

Try these suggestions for maintaining safe interest areas.

The following suggestions apply to individual interest areas.

Sand and water: Locate away from electrical outlets and cords. Use newspapers, drop cloths, or towels to control spills; have a mop, towels, and sponges nearby; limit the number of children using the area at one time.

House corner: Set up so the wall(s), shelves, and furniture create three sides. Remove drawstrings and shorten sleeves and hems of adult clothes so children don't get caught or trip while walking. Check furniture regularly to make sure it is in good repair.

Cooking: Set up near a source of water and a fire extinguisher. Use a work surface that is at children's level. Regularly check the cords and functioning of electric appliances and place them near outlets. Teach children safe ways to use child-sized knives and closely supervise activities.

Woodworking: Open this area only when a teacher is available to offer close supervision to a very small group of children. Provide sturdy, real tools that children can use with success, and have children wear safety goggles.

Blocks: Enclose on three sides. If you locate the block area in a corner you have two sides enclosed and just need a shelf. Set up in a large space with a level floor, preferably, covered with indoor-outdoor carpeting. Place tape on the floor to define a "no building zone." Store blocks on low, open, labeled shelves with the largest ones on the bottom. Set and post guidelines for the height of structures.

Table toys: Make sure all play materials meet the standards set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission—no sharp points or edges, no pieces small enough to be swallowed, and no pieces that can be used as projectiles. Use labeled storage containers so children can easily put items away. Teach children to check the floor regularly so they don't trip over small items such as loose beads or Legos.

Art: Locate near a source of water. Adjust open easels to children's height and fasten them securely. Use nontoxic supplies only. Store scissors with the points facing down. Provide sponges and towels for wiping up spills. Art materials should be certified as safe by organizations such as The Art and Craft Materials Institute.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring children's safety outdoors.

Whether you use an outdoor play area at your program or a neighborhood park, it must have certain features that promote the safety of preschool children. The following list describes characteristics of safe playgrounds.[3]

- A fence encloses the area, is in good repair, and is free of splinters.
- Traffic paths are clearly defined and separate from other areas.

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[3] Based on Collins Management Consulting, Inc., *Head Start Facilities Manual* (Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services, 1995) pp. 25-26 and 48-49; and Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood*, Third Edition (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992) pp. 338-340.

- The area drains well.
- The area has 80 to 100 square feet per child.
- Bathrooms and a telephone are located nearby.
- The area is arranged so teachers can see all the children, all the time.
- The area is arranged so all children, including those with mobility impairments, can move about safely and participate fully.
- Equipment is securely anchored to the ground.
- Each piece of equipment is surrounded by a 6-foot wide safety zone.
- Equipment is in good repair and free of splinters, rough surfaces, frayed cables, worn ropes, and chains that could pinch.
- There are 10 to 12 inches of shock-absorbing cushioning (wood mulch, sand, or pea gravel) under and around equipment.
- Openings in equipment are less than three or greater than nine inches wide, so children can't get stuck.
- Climbing structures are no more than six feet high.
- Slides have:
    - a platform that can hold several children at a time;
    - handrails to support children as they sit at the top of the slide;
    - sides at least four inches high for the entire length of the sliding surface;
    - a bottom parallel to the ground to reduce speed and make it easier to stand; and
    - an open area where they end.
- Metal slides are located in the shade.
- Swings are located toward a corner or edge of the playground and have:
    - seats made of a lightweight flexible material-rubber, canvas, plastic;
    - tightly closed S-hooks used for suspension; and
    - no animal or rope swings, trapeze bars, or exercise rings.

- Tire swings are separated from conventional swings.
- Sand boxes are covered to keep out cats and other animals.

Use safety checklists regularly.

Teachers must also be sure that the wheeled toys children use outdoors are safe. Tricycles and other riding toys should be spoke-less, steerable, and have a low center of gravity. Riding toys should be the appropriate size for the children in the class, and children should wear safety helmets while riding. The program should provide plastic liners so children can share helmets.

A safe environment must be maintained. Because children use materials and equipment continuously, wear and tear can make a once safe item or area dangerous. To maintain a safe environment, teachers must stay one step ahead of the children. They continually check toys and equipment for sturdiness, make sure that exit paths stay clear, and remove unsafe items to be repaired.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you use daily and monthly safety checklists to assess your indoor and outdoor environments. There is space on each checklist to add additional items required by licensing regulations or your program's safety guidelines. Next, you use the checklists to identify items that need your attention and describe steps you can take to improve the safety of your indoor and outdoor areas.

Indoor Safety Checklist

Check Daily

Safety Conditions	Satisfactory or Not Applicable	Needs Attention
1. The written schedule states the times each teacher will supervise areas and activities so children are monitored at all times.		
2. The room is free of clutter.		
3. Electrical outlets are covered and cords are out of children's reach and away from water and traffic paths.		
4. Toxic materials and cleaning supplies are stored in their original labeled containers in a place inaccessible to children.		
5. Furniture has no sharp edges or corners at children's eye level.		
6. Inclines are clearly marked.		
7. Storage units are stable and secured; drawers and doors are closed.		
8. Steps and platforms are padded and have protective railings.		
9. Steps, climbers, and lofts have padding underneath and protective railings.		
10. Scissors, knives, and other sharp objects are out of children's reach.		
11. The room contains no highly flammable furnishings or decorations.		
12. Each area has enough space for children to work and play.		
13. There are timers, signs, and planning boards to help children take turns and follow occupancy limits for interest areas.		
14. Equipment and furniture are properly anchored or secured.		
15. Carpets are securely attached and have no frayed edges.		
16. Floors are dry.		
17. Exit signs are in working order.		
18. Exit doors and traffic paths are clearly marked and free of clutter.		

Safety Conditions	Satisfactory or Not Applicable	Needs Attention
19. Staffing patterns meet required child-adult ratios at all times.		
20. Electric fans are mounted securely and are out of children's reach.		
21.		
22.		
23.		
Check Monthly		
24. Blocks and other wooden items are smooth and splinter-free.		
25. Moving parts (wheels, knobs) are securely fastened and working properly.		
26. Scissors and knives children use are sharp enough for easy cutting.		
27. Hinges, screws, and bolts on furniture and equipment are securely fastened.		
28. Electrical wires are not frayed.		
29. Radiators and hot water pipes are covered or insulated.		
30. The smoke detectors are 6 to 12 inches below the ceiling 40 feet apart, working properly, and have batteries less than one year old.		
31. The fire extinguishers are properly located and fully charged.		
32. The emergency plans are posted.		
33. An emergency drill is held each month.		
34. The telephone is accessible and working properly.		
35. Parents' emergency numbers are up to date.		
36.		
37.		
39.		

Outdoor Safety Checklist

Check Daily

Safety Conditions	Satisfactory or Not Applicable	Needs Attention
1. The area is securely fenced, and gate latches are locked and may be opened only by adults.		
2. Play equipment is free of splinters, rough surfaces, frayed cables, worn ropes, and chains that could pinch.		
3. There is shock-absorbing cushioning (10-12 inches of wood mulch, sand, or pea gravel) under and around climbers, slides, and swings.		
4. No objects or obstructions are under or around equipment where children might fall.		
5. Play areas are free of broken glass, debris, standing water, and loose gravel (on asphalt).		
6. Safety zones are marked around swings and slides. Teachers remind children what the marks mean.		
7. Riding paths are clearly marked, gently curved, and separate from other areas.		
8. There is adequate space for the day's activities and equipment is arranged to avoid collisions.		
9.		
10.		
11.		

Check Monthly

Safety Conditions	Satisfactory or Not Applicable	Needs Attention
13. Screws, nuts, and bolts on climbing and other equipment are securely fastened and do not stick out.		
14. Metal equipment is free of rust or chipped paint.		
15. All equipment is securely affixed to the ground.		
16. Tricycles and other wheeled toys are in good repair (screws tightened, free of rust, etc.).		
17. The sandbox cover is free of splinters and in good repair.		
18.		
19.		
20.		

Use the completed checklists to identify and list the items that you found in need of attention. Then describe the steps you can take to improve the safety of your environment.

Items Needing Attention	Steps to Improve the Safety of the Environment	Date Completed

Discuss your steps for improving your program's environment with your trainer and your colleagues. Make the changes, and check them off as they are completed. With your colleagues, develop a schedule for conducting daily and monthly safety checks of the indoor and outdoor environments.

III. Handling Accidents and Emergencies

In this activity you will learn to:

- Prepare for accidents and other emergencies
- Follow your program's procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies

Even the most safety-conscious and well-prepared teacher will have to deal with accidents and emergencies from time to time. How would you respond if a child fell off the climber? If the building lost power during a rainstorm? If you smelled smoke? Because accidents and emergencies can occur at any time, it makes sense to get ready for them before they happen. Part of keeping children safe is knowing and following the program's policies and procedures for responding to accidents and emergencies. The more familiar you are with these procedures, the more quickly and effectively you can respond.

Responding to Children's Injuries

Most accidents preschoolers have result in minor injuries—bumped heads or sore knees—requiring only soothing words and perhaps a bandage. For minor injuries such as cuts and bruises, your program probably has an accident injury form you must complete. Be sure to inform parents of the incident when they pick up their children at the end of the day and ask them to read and sign the form. In addition, let your supervisor know about the accident.

Stay calm and follow proper procedures.

Sometimes, children's injuries are serious enough to require medical assistance on site and perhaps taking a child to the hospital. Follow your program's procedures for seeking emergency medical assistance right away if the child is unconscious, if a wound continues to bleed even when direct pressure is applied, or if the child has a severe reaction to an insect bite or sting. The American Red Cross recommends calling for medical assistance immediately if a child has any of the following symptoms or conditions:[4]

- looks or acts very ill or seems to be getting worse quickly
- has neck pain when the head is moved or touched
- has a stiff neck or severe headache

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[4] *National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*, a joint collaborative project of the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, supported by Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, published by National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, Arlington, VA, 1992.

- has a seizure for the first time
- acts unusually confused
- has uneven sized pupils (black centers of the eyes)
- has a blood-red or purple rash made up of pinhead-sized spots or bruises that are not associated with injury
- has a rash or hives or welts that appear quickly
- breathes so fast or hard that he or she cannot play, talk, cry, or drink
- has a severe stomachache causing the child to double up and scream
- has a stomachache (without vomiting or diarrhea) after a recent injury, blow to the abdomen, or hard fall
- has stools that are black or have blood mixed through them
- has not urinated in more than 8 hours; has dry mouth and tongue
- has continuous clear drainage from the nose following a hard blow to the head

Be sure to call the child's parents as soon as you complete the emergency call.

Your program should have a plan for emergency transportation to the closest hospital or health care facility. If you must accompany a child in the ambulance, be sure to bring with you the child's signed medical history and emergency authorization forms. Most programs ask parents to complete forms authorizing emergency medical care and providing the names and phone numbers of emergency contacts. The director or a colleague should contact the child's parents and ask them to meet you at the hospital as soon as possible.

First-Aid Procedures

First aid is the immediate care you provide to a child who is injured or ill. It is a way to manage the situation until further medical care can take place. In cases of drowning, electric shock, and smoke inhalation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is used to clear the patient's throat and help him or her to breathe. Many early childhood programs require teachers and other staff to take first-aid and CPR training and to update their skills and knowledge annually.

Maintain a well-stocked first-aid kit.

Every early childhood program should maintain at least two well-stocked first-aid kits—one to be used at the program and one to take on field trips. Keep first-aid supplies in a closed container that is accessible to all staff but out of children's reach. Restock the kits after each use and check them every month to make sure all items are still in place. A basic first-aid kit contains the following items:[5]

- recently published first aid guide (Red Cross or equivalent)
- index cards or note pad and pens
- flashlight
- coins to make emergency calls (at least $1.00)
- disposable, nonporous gloves
- sealed packages of alcohol wipes or antiseptic
- water
- antibacterial soap
- boxes of sterile gauze pads (2" X 2" and 4" X 4")
- rolls of flexible 2" roller gauze (2" and 4")
- bandage tape
- assorted small bandages (extras of the 1" size)
- a triangular muslin bandage
- blunt tip scissors
- tweezers
- thermometer
- a large, clean container (1- to 2-quart) for use in flushing eyes
- eye irrigation saline solution
- eye dressing

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[5] *National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*, a joint collaborative project of the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, supported by Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, published by National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, Arlington, VA, 1992.

- cold pack
- plastic bags to make ice packs
- safety pins
- syrup of Ipecac and poison control center phone number (see discussion below under poison emergencies)
- additional supplies for a child with special health needs (e.g., a bee sting kit or antihistamine for a child with severe allergy, honey or sugar for a child with diabetes, or an inhalator for a child with asthma)

It is also a good idea to keep extra blankets, pillows, and ice packs on hand.

Follow these steps when giving first aid.

If you must administer first aid, try to remain calm so you can think clearly and act appropriately. Reassure the child. Ask other children to move away from the victim so you can carry out the necessary first aid in a clear area. While you attend to the injured child, have someone else call 911 for assistance. If more than one person is hurt, begin by administering first aid to the person who seems to be in the greatest danger. When giving first aid, remember these important rules.

- Do no harm. Harm might occur if you fail to treat the injury or if you make the injury worse.
- Do not move a hurt child except to save a life. Moving the child might cause further injury.

1. **Find out what happened.**

   What caused the injury?

   How?

   Who is hurt?

   Is there still danger?

2. **Check for life-threatening problems.**

   Is the child conscious?

   If not, is the child breathing (chest moving and air coming out of nose or mouth)?

   If the child is not breathing, lift only the child's jaw and give four quick breaths of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Is there a pulse in the neck? If not start CPR.

If the child is conscious, ask questions such as, "What's your name?" to help determine the child's condition. Keep checking breathing and pulse.

Wash any wounds to reduce chances of infection.

3. **Decide whether to call an ambulance.** If you have any doubt about the child's well-being, call an ambulance. Then call the child's parents.
4. **Check for injuries.** Start at the head and work down. When medical personnel arrive, they will ask you for this information.
5. **Regroup.** Check the condition of any other injured children. Calmly explain to everyone present that you are taking care of the injured child.
6. **Complete an accident report form.** Follow procedures for reporting the accident and give copies of the form to the parents.

Follow these CPR steps if a child is not breathing.

If the child is not breathing, use the following techniques:

- Clear the throat with a finger sweep and wipe out any fluid, vomit, mucus, or foreign body.
- Place the victim on his or her back.
- Straighten neck (unless neck injury is suspected) and lift the victim's jaw.
- Pinch the child's nostrils closed and give slow, steady breaths into the mouth.
- Breathe at 15 puffs per minute. Use only enough air to move the child's chest up and down.

If there is no pulse or heartbeat, use the following technique:

- Place the victim on a firm surface.
- Depress 1/3 of the breastbone with the heel of your hand at 80 compressions per minute. There should be 5 compressions to one respiration.
- Call an ambulance immediately if this procedure is not successful.

Use these techniques if a child is choking.

If a child is choking, place the child on his or her back. Kneel down and place the heel of your hand on the child's abdomen in the midline between the navel and the rib cage. Apply a series of 6 to 10 rapid inward and upward abdominal thrusts, until the foreign object is expelled. Use two hands to apply the thrusts while the child is sitting, standing, or lying down. If this procedure is not successful, call an ambulance as quickly as possible.

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Follow these procedures when responding to burns.

If a child has extensive burns, electrical burns, and burns of any size on his or her face, hands, feet, or genitalia, the first thing to do is to call an ambulance.

If burns are caused by heat, respond as follows:

- Immerse the burned area in cool water or apply cool (50° to 60° F) compresses to burns on a child's trunk or face to relieve the pain.
- Do not break blisters.
- Use aluminum foil as an emergency covering because it will not stick to the burn.

Respond as follows for extensive burns:

- Keep the patient flat and warm.
- Remove clothing from the burn area if it comes off easily; if not, leave it alone.
- Apply cool, wet compresses to the injured area (not more the 25 percent of the body at a time).
- Do not use ointments, greases, or powders.

For electrical burns, respond as follows:

- Do not use your bare hands.
- Disconnect the power source if possible or pull the child away from the source using wood or cloth (these will not conduct electricity).
- Apply CPR if necessary.

Learn how to respond to a poison emergency.

A poison emergency occurs when a toxic substance touches someone in a harmful way. This can happen when someone swallows a toxic substance, gets chemicals in the eyes, or touches or breathes toxic fumes. The following common substances might be poisonous: cleaners and laundry products; hair care products; prescription and over-the-counter drugs; art supplies; plant food and lawn care chemicals; cigarettes; liquor; paint and paint removal products; and workroom supplies. None of these should be accessible to children.

Whenever you suspect or know that a child has been poisoned, call the poison control center or a medical clinic immediately. Tell the individual answering the phone what product or chemical the child was exposed to (have the container with you when you make the call). Tell the person how much the child took or was exposed to and how long ago the accident took place.

Although the first-aid kit should include syrup of ipecac, a substance that induces vomiting, it should not be administered until someone has checked with the child's physician or the poison control center in your community. Using ipecac is not always advisable. Some poisons, such as drain cleaner or lye, can do serious damage to the esophagus if vomited. After receiving syrup of ipecac, the child must go to a hospital for medical evaluation.

Responding to Fires

Every month, teachers should hold an emergency drill so all the children and adults will know what to do if they must quickly leave the building during a fire or other emergency. The program's emergency procedures should be posted in every classroom so all adults can work as a team to lead the children to safety. It is helpful to designate specific staff responsibilities in advance. Emergency responsibilities might include administering first-aid if needed, overseeing the evacuation of the building, accounting for all children and adults, and calling 911.

Know when it is appropriate to use a fire extinguisher.

It is important to know when and when not to use a fire extinguisher. Do not try to fight fires that spread beyond the spot where they started. For example, you can probably put out a grease fire in a frying pan, but if it gets out of control or threatens to block an exit, you and the children should get out of the building immediately. Use an extinguisher after all the children are safely out of the building and in the care of a responsible person and only if the following conditions exist.

- You can get out fast if your efforts aren't working.
- You are nearby when the fire starts, or you discover the fire soon after it has started.
- The fire is small and confined to a space such as a trash can, cushion, or small appliance.
- You can fight the fire with your back to an exit.
- The extinguisher is in working order, and you can: stand back about 8 feet; aim at the base of the fire, not the flames or smoke; and squeeze or press the lever while sweeping from the sides to the middle.

If in doubt, get out!

If you have the slightest doubt about whether to fight the fire or get out, get out of the building and call the fire department. Your safety is more important than the property you might save.

If the building is filled with smoke, have the children crawl under the smoke to get to safety. If a child's clothes catch fire, tell him or her to drop and roll. You can practice this procedure during one of your emergency drills. Apply cold water to burns immediately and cover the injury with a loose bandage or clean cloth.

Responding to Other Emergencies

Flood, landslides, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other weather-related emergencies may occur with little or no warning. If you know what to do, you can act swiftly. Contact local authorities or the National Weather Service to learn about the recommended precautions and responses to weather-related emergencies. Review your program's plans for responding to these events. Discuss and role-play with the children how everyone should respond in a real emergency.

Learn how to respond during weather-related emergencies typical to your area.

The National Weather Service recommends the actions described below in case of lightning storms, tornadoes, and earthquakes.

Lightning storms. To avoid being outdoors in a lightning storm, get weather information before taking children away from the program center. If you are caught in a lightning storm, move to shelter as quickly as possible, preferably in a vehicle or in a low area under small trees. Observe these precautions.

- Stay out of metal or wood sheds.
- Do not stand on a hilltop.
- Avoid being the tallest object in the area.
- Stay away from isolated trees and from items made of metal—pipes, rails, fences, and wire clotheslines.
- Do not cluster together—but spread out and keep several yards apart.
- Stay away from water.

If your hair stands on end, you are in **immediate danger**—drop to your knees and curl your head forward. Make your body as small as possible. When someone is struck by lightning, he or she carries no electrical charge and may be handled safely. Even if the person is feeling fine, immediate medical attention is recommended. Keep the person warm and elevate his or her legs.

Tornadoes. Tornadoes can arrive with little warning. If you are in a building and time permits, practice these precautions.

- Move to a basement or storm shelter.
- If there is no basement, go to a small room, closet, or bathroom in the center of the building and stay away from windows.
- If you are in a high-rise building, move to the center of the building, preferably to a stairwell. Do not open or stay near windows.

If outdoors, have the children lie down in a low area and cover their heads with their arms. If in a vehicle, stop immediately. Get the children out and have them lie face down with their heads covered.

Earthquakes. If your program is located in an area where earthquakes are likely, keep a transistor radio in your room and practice with the children what to do if there is an earthquake.

If inside, stay there and get away from the windows. Have the children cover their heads and the backs of their necks with pillows, magazines, or books. Children can get under tables or stay inside a strong doorway. If outside, stay there and keep away from high buildings, walls, power poles, and similar objects.

After the earthquake, wait for additional shocks. Do not light matches or turn on any lights because you could cause a fire. Keep your head and face protected as you check on the children. Administer first aid if needed. Turn on your transistor radio and listen for emergency instructions.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review your program's established procedures for responding to accidents and evacuating children and staff in case of fire or other emergencies. Then answer the questions on accident and emergency procedures that follow.

Emergency and Accident Procedures

What would you do if a child cut his or her leg during outdoor play?

What would you do if a child had a seizure?

Who informs parents if their child has a minor injury? When are the parents informed?

Who calls for emergency medical assistance if a child has a serious injury? What is the procedure for contacting the child's parents?

To which hospital would the program take a seriously injured child? How would the child be transported?

What would you do if a fire started during a cooking activity?

What is your emergency evacuation plan? What would you do if the planned evacuation route was blocked?

What emergencies (weather-related or otherwise) might affect your program? What are the procedures for preparing for and handling these emergencies.

Discuss your answers with your trainer. If you have questions about what to do in an emergency, review your program's emergency procedures and discuss them with your supervisor.

IV. Ensuring Children's Safety Away from the Program[6]

In this activity you will learn to:

- Keep children safe while walking near traffic
- Plan and implement field trips with children

The preschool years are a time when children expand their understanding of the world around them. One of the ways you can support children's growing interest in their community is by planning walks in the neighborhood and field trips to interesting places. Remember, however, that taking children away from the program involves an element of risk. You and the children might have to cross busy streets, travel in cars or vans, or take public transportation to new and unfamiliar locations. You can minimize the risks to children's safety by teaching children how to cross streets and walk near traffic, and by following the program's procedures for conducting safe field trips.

Walking Safely Near Traffic

There are many good reasons why you and the children might take a neighborhood walk. A nearby park might offer the children a new and challenging environment. A particular walk might provide an opportunity to explore a new concept or skill: a listening walk; a walk to collect seeds in the fall; or a visit to a local store to purchase something the group needs or to learn about the community.

Preschool children are capable of learning and following rules about walking in traffic safely. Before taking a walk with children, review and discuss the following safety guidelines.

- Obey the crosswalk signals—"Walk" and "Don't Walk."
- Cross at the corner and stay within the crosswalk.
- Never walk out from between parked cars.
- Always walk on the sidewalk.
- Look left, right, and left again before crossing, even when the light is green or the signal says "Walk."

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[6] Strategies in this section are based in part on Abby Shapiro Kendrick, Roxane Kaufmann, and Katherine P. Messenger, editors, *Healthy Young Children, A Manual for Programs* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988), pp. 57 and 85-90.

Try these suggestions for ensuring children's safety when walking near traffic.

During your neighborhood walks, follow these rules consistently and talk to children about what you are doing. "There's the corner where we will cross the street." Post pictures of traffic warning signs (stop lights, stop signs, crosswalks) in the classroom and discuss them with the children. Point out these signs when you are on a walk and talk about how they help keep people safe.

- Use a knotted clothesline or rope to keep the group together and have each child hold onto a knot.
- Make the walk fun by singing a song, looking for objects or shapes, or playing "Follow the Leader."
- Know which children may need close attention on a walk and be sure one adult is assigned to be close by at all times.
- Return to the program if children seem tired, frustrated, or are misbehaving.

Planning Safe Field Trips

Field trips often expose children to new and unfamiliar places. For preschoolers, trips should be to nearby sites and should last no more than a few hours. For example, most preschoolers are ready for a morning trip to the Children's Museum to see a specific room or exhibit. An all-day trip would be too tiring and overwhelming for this age group.

The children are likely to be excited and apprehensive about an upcoming field trip. Some children may be fearful about leaving the program, disrupting the normal routine, and going to a strange place. They may worry that their parents won't know where to find them. You, too, may be nervous about supervising the children in an unfamiliar location. If you are driving, you might be anxious about getting to and from the place or about parking. If you are taking public transportation, you might worry about children getting separated from the group. For all these reasons, it is important to plan ahead and take precautions to ensure children's safety on field trips.

Take these steps before a field trip.

Prior to each trip, you and your colleagues can divide up the planning tasks and then report back to each other.

- Recruit volunteers—parents, senior citizens, students from early childhood courses at a local college or high school—to help supervise the children. Be sure volunteers are always accompanied by someone from the program.
- Obtain signed permission slips for each trip so parents know when their children will be leaving the program and where they will be going.
- Go over the route to be sure you have correct directions and have allocated adequate time for travel and the visit.

- Check the first-aid kit and replace missing or outdated items. Provide a first-aid kit for each vehicle and/or group of children.
- Prepare a trip folder with a list of emergency phone numbers, signed parent emergency forms (be sure information is current), signed permission slips, and information about the site.
- If you will be traveling by car, make sure you have a seat belt for each child and adult.
- If you will be traveling by public transportation, have a plan for paying fares and getting all the children on and off the vehicle.
- If possible, visit the site in advance, travelling there using the same route you will follow on the trip. Look for potential problems such as detours, one-way streets, or parking restrictions. Adjust the trip schedule if needed.
- While at the site, locate the telephones, restrooms, shelters for poor weather, and where to go for emergency assistance.
- Make tags or badges for each child stating the name and telephone number of your program.
- Prepare children for the trip by discussing what you will see and do. Involve children in setting safety rules. Give children clear instructions about what to do if they get separated from the group.

Follow your plans while on the field trip.

The planning you do before a field trip goes a long way in making you feel relaxed and in control. Children will sense this and be reassured by your calm manner. You also set an example for children by following safety rules yourself. On the day of the trip, use a checklist to remind yourself of what to do at each stage. Include the following items and others relevant to your program.

Before you leave the program:

- Review the trip folder to make sure it is complete.
- Give each group or vehicle a first-aid kit.

When traveling by car or van:

- Place one and only one child in a securely adjusted seat belt.
- Remove sharp or heavy objects from inside the vehicle—these can become deadly projectiles in a sudden stop.
- Remind children to keep seat belts buckled and arms and heads inside.

When traveling by bus or subway:

- Review the procedures for getting on and off the vehicle.
- Remind children to stay seated and keep arms and heads inside.

On your way to and from the site:

- Use travel time to talk about scenes along the way, what you expect to see when you arrive at your destination, and to remind children of the safety rules.
- If children become unruly or undo their seat belts, pull off the road and stop. Do not try to discipline children while driving. Let children know that the rules must be followed.
- Never leave children in a vehicle without adult supervision.

While you are at the site:

- Check prearranged procedures on arrival.
- Closely supervise all children all the time.
- Pay attention to children's behavior. If children seem tired or frustrated cut the visit short and return to the program.

When you leave the site:

- Account for everyone. Count children and adults at least twice.
- Once again, make sure everyone is wearing a seat belt.
- Review the safety rules.

Ensuring children's safety is especially challenging when you are away from the program. Following the suggestions in this learning activity will help you meet the challenge.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you review your program's policies and procedures for ensuring children's safety on field trips and when walking in the neighborhood. After recording them on the form that follows, you can compare them to the suggestions in this activity and list safety precautions you want to add.

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Protecting Children Away from the Program

What are your program's policies and procedures for taking children on neighborhood walks?

What does your program require you to do before taking a field trip?

What are the policies and procedures for keeping children safe on field trips?

How can you improve the procedures and planning process to more effectively ensure children's safety away from the program?

Discuss your answers with your trainer and colleagues. Implement the ideas that will improve your program's safety practices.

V. Helping Children Learn to Keep Themselves Safe

In this activity you will learn to:

- Teach children how to stay safe throughout the day
- Develop safety rules with children

The first step in teaching children safety is to show them—by your actions—how you prevent accidents. Children need to see adults acting in safe ways:

- walking, not running, in the room;
- sitting, not standing, on chairs;
- using a step stool to reach a high cupboard; and
- keeping their hands away from sharp objects during woodworking and cooking.

When you or a colleague are using a potentially dangerous item or taking a risk, talk to the children about what's happening and why.

> "Mr. Chanute is changing the light bulb over the water table. He's moving the water table out of the way. Now he can set up the step ladder right under the light. Now, he's opening up the ladder and fastening the safety latches. The latches help to keep the ladder steady so he won't fall. Mr. Lopez will stand nearby to pass Mr. Chanute the new bulb and to be ready to help, if needed. . . ."

Teach children about safety during daily activities.

There are numerous opportunities throughout the day to explain and demonstrate the safe way to use materials, play games, and carry out routines. Here are some suggestions for teaching children to do things the safe way:

Explain to children what they can do, rather than what they cannot. Offer reminders as often as needed. "The area behind the orange cones is the safety zone for the slide. You can kick your ball on the grass."

Be consistent in applying rules and offer praise to the children who follow them. "Drew, I see you remembered to wear a safety helmet while riding your trike."

When necessary, step in to assist a child in following the rules. "I can't let you build any higher than this because the blocks might fall down and hurt you or one of the other children."

Remove the child from the situation if he or she continues to break a safety rule, and explain why he or she is being removed. "Nellie, put the scissors down. I told you twice to stop waving the scissors in the air because someone could get hurt."

Show children how to use equipment properly (for example, how to hold a saw and where to place one's hands when sawing a board).

Involve children in cleanup routines so they will learn that potentially hazardous equipment should be stored safely. "Thank you for placing the knives in the basket. I'll put them on top of the cabinet until I can wash and put them away."

Preschool children are beginning to understand cause and effect, which helps them recognize how accidents happen and what can be done to prevent them. They can make predictions and talk about past, present, and future events. Using simple language, you can talk with children about dangerous situations and remind them of previous situations in which children did or did not stay safe. "Do you remember what happened last week when Mara and Tony ran around the room? They bumped into each other and banged their heads." You can also demonstrate, using concrete objects and experiences, the correct ways to use materials and equipment.

Children can help develop safety rules.

Most preschoolers can understand and follow safety rules, though they are likely to need frequent reminders. The children in your group are more likely to understand and remember to follow safety rules they themselves have helped set. To develop safety rules with children, you might start a discussion by saying:

- "Tell me about . . ."
- "What could happen when . . . ?"
- "What might happen if . . . ?"

For example, assume you are planning a cooking activity that involves use of an electric skillet. Before the activity, you can meet with the children to set some rules for safe use of the skillet. You might say, "Tell me about cooking with skillets." The children will offer several different comments: "It's fun," and "It gets really hot." Then ask, "What might happen if you put your hand on a hot skillet?" "You would get burned," a child answers. Now you can lead the group in developing the following rules for using the skillet:

- Keep your hands off the skillet.
- Use a pot holder to hold the handle.
- Only one child can use the skillet at a time.

By participating in similar discussions, children learn that there are things they can do to keep themselves safe. As teachers offer reminders of safety rules while supervising activities, children begin to develop the skills and sound judgment needed to keep themselves safe.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you work with a small group of children to develop safety limits for an indoor or outdoor interest area. Review the example, then begin the activity.

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Developing Safety Rules with Children

(Example)

Area: *Woodworking* **Age(s):** *4-5 years* **Date:** *September 10*

What do you think are the safety hazards in this area?

Children could get hurt using the tools. They could cut themselves with saws, hit their fingers with the hammers, or pinch their fingers with the vises and pliers. They might get splinters from the wood, even though we check the wood before putting it out. Children could swallow nails and other small items. If they don't wear safety goggles they could get something in their eyes.

How did the children answer your "tell me about..." questions?

Rion said, "It's fun." Sabrina said, "You can hammer your finger." Kim said, "You can make things." Cynthia said, "You can saw something you shouldn't."

How did the children answer your "what might happen if..." and "what could happen when..." questions?

Sabrina said, "You could hammer your finger, if you're not watching what you're doing." Cynthia said, "You could cut your finger with the saw, if your hands aren't in the right place."

What safety limits did you and the children develop?

Only two children may use the woodworking area at a time.

One adult must be in the area when children are working.

Wear safety goggles to protect our eyes.

Use vises or C-clamps to hold tools or equipment.

Keep nails, wood, and tools out of our mouths.

Put tools back on their hooks after using them.

Developing Safety Rules with Children

Area: ______________________ **Age(s):** ________ **Date:** ________

What do you think are the safety hazards in this area?

How did the children answer your "tell me about . . ." question?

How did the children answer your "what might happen if . . ." and "what could happen when . . ." questions?

What safety limits did you and the children develop?

Discuss your responses with your trainer. Because keeping children safe is a team effort, you should also discuss this activity with your colleagues.

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Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for keeping children safe.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about keeping children safe during the time you were working on this module. Compare your ideas to those in the completed chart at the end of the module.
- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned, and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 27-29)

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Reduce and Prevent Accidents and Injuries

1. **How did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards work together to make the program safer?**
   a. *When Ms. Kim spotted Jill climbing on a box, she alerted Ms. Richards, who was closer to Jill.*

   b. *Ms. Richards responded quickly to Ms. Kim's warning and calmly moved in to help Jill climb down.*

   c. *Ms. Richards asked Jill to help her put the box in the closet so children wouldn't climb on it.*

   d. *Ms. Richards suggests that Jill climb on the climber.*

2. **What do you think Jill learned from this experience?**
   a. *She learned that she could safely climb on the climber, but not on the box.*

   b. *She learned that Ms. Richards would keep her safe.*

   c. *She learned that she could help Ms. Richards make the room safer for all the children.*

Responding to Accidents and Emergencies

1. **How did Mr. Lopez know what to do?**
   a. *He used the chart taped to the inside lid of the first-aid kit, that described how to treat minor injuries.*

   b. *The program had accident report forms and a daily chart to record information.*

2. **What did Mr. Lopez do to reassure Andy?**
   a. *He told Andy that he was being brave.*

   b. *He explained that he was cleaning the knee so it would heal.*

   c. *He took him back to the room and told him his injury had been taken care of and that he was now safe and ready to play.*

Helping Children Develop Safe Habits

1. **How did Ms. Williams let the children know that the program is a safe place?**
   a. *She walked calmly to the block area.*

   b. *She encouraged Kristen to recognize the possible danger of her structure.*

   c. *She and the children discussed how to build high buildings in a safe way.*

2. **How were the children learning to keep themselves safe?**
   a. *They discussed how to build tall structures safely.*

   b. *They decided they need a safety chart for the block area.*

   c. *They planned to talk about what to put on the safety chart during group time.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe

(p. 37)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Safe
They have lots of energy and run, hop, and jump.	*Set up the indoor and outdoor areas so children can move freely without bumping into each other or the furniture and equipment. Limit running to the outdoor area or a supervised hallway and offer frequent, positive reminders: "Walk inside". Provide energy outlets indoors such as a climber or a movement activity.*
They may have accidents when they are tired or over-excited.	*Follow a schedule that provides a balance between quiet and active times and times spent alone, in small groups, and with the whole class. Pay attention to children's actions and feelings and suggest an activity at a quieter pace if needed. Use a flexible approach to routines so children can rest or sleep if they are tired.*
They ride tricycles and other moving equipment.	*Designate hard surfaces for riding. Provide tricycles and safety helmets sized to fit the children. Discuss with children safe ways to ride trikes, pull wagons, and so on.*
They slide, swing, and climb on equipment.	*Make sure equipment is sturdy and has adequate cushioning beneath. Mark off areas around swings and at the base of slides that must be kept clear so children aren't knocked down.*
They throw, kick, and catch objects.	*Provide an area where children can throw and kick soft objects without hurting others. Remind children to kick and throw balls and bean bags, not sand, toys, and other items that could cause injuries.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe

(p. 38)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Safe
They can use tools such as knives, scissors, and woodworking equipment.	*Use butter knives for meals and sharp child-sized knives for cooking. Provide sturdy tools children can use with success. Store tools when not in use. Demonstrate how to use tools safely and involve children in setting safety rules. Limit the number of children in cooking and woodworking at one time and offer close supervision.*
They perform toileting routines independently.	*Supervise handwashing, brushing teeth, and using the toilet. Provide nontoxic liquid soap in an easy-to-use pump. Remind children to keep water in the sink and ask them to help mop up spills. Test the water to make sure it is hot enough for handwashing but not so hot that children get burned.*
They begin to understand cause and effect.	*Involve children in discussing and setting safety rules and limits—for example, height limits for block structures. Use positive statements as reminders. Point out potential hazards and discuss what might happen if they are not removed or avoided.*
They like to take risks and face challenges.	*Closely supervise areas, activities, and equipment that offer challenges, but might lead to injuries if children act without thinking. Teach children the safe way to use potentially dangerous equipment and materials. Praise children for following safety rules.*
They poke, handle, and squeeze objects to discover what they are and what they can do.	*Cover exposed radiators. Remove toys and other items with jagged edges or splinters. Keep sharp items (knives, teacher's scissors) out of children's reach. Store cleaning materials and poisonous substances in locked cabinets.*

Glossary

Accident

Unplanned or unexpected situation which may result in minor or major injury to children or adults.

Emergency

Unplanned or unexpected event that calls for immediate action to keep children and adults safe.

Precaution

Step taken to prevent accidents or to ensure safety.

Safety

Freedom from danger, harm or loss.

Module 2: *Healthy*

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Overview

Keeping children healthy involves:

- Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that promote wellness and reduce the spread of disease
- Helping children develop habits that promote good hygiene and nutrition
- Recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect

Healthy people feel good about themselves.

Good health is a state of well-being—physical, mental, and social—not simply the absence of disease. People who are healthy generally:

- are well-rested, energetic, and strong;
- eat the right foods;
- avoid (or use moderately) alcohol, cigarettes, and caffeine;
- exercise regularly; and
- get along well with others.

Each of us has certain daily routines that affect our health. Some of these routines may be good for us, and some may not. Because all of us want to become and remain healthy, we try to increase the number of good routines, such as snacking on fruits and vegetables, and decrease the number of bad ones, such as smoking or failing to get enough exercise.

Hygienic environments promote wellness and reduce the spread of disease.

As an early childhood educator, you play a key role in keeping children healthy. Children under the age of five have more illnesses related to infection than any other age group. Children in group care tend to be exposed to more diseases than those cared for in their own homes. Although preschool children can do many things for themselves, teachers need to maintain hygienic environments that promote wellness and reduce the spread of disease.

An important part of keeping preschool children healthy is providing many opportunities for them to get exercise by running, jumping, climbing, throwing, and catching. These types of play provide a safe release of energy as well as an opportunity to exercise developing muscles. Of course, most children need to rest after active play. A balanced program of active and quiet times, and indoor and outdoor activities, allows children to get both the physical activity and the rest they need. Most full-day programs allow time for children to nap or rest quietly in the afternoon.

Teachers can model healthy practices.

One way children learn about good health and nutrition is by following the lead of adults. When you wash your hands and encourage children to wash theirs, you model an effective way to prevent diseases from spreading. When you eat breakfast family-style with the children, you model a healthy nutrition practice—starting the day with a balanced meal. In addition, you teach about good health and nutrition in the course of daily life at the program. You offer nutritious snacks, clean soiled table tops, and encourage children to help you keep the room clean.

Preschool children can use self-help skills to keep themselves healthy. They put on their jackets before going out on a cold day, brush their teeth after meals, and wash their hands after using the toilet. Children can also learn to prepare, select, and eat nutritious foods. Cooking activities and eating family-style allow preschoolers to learn about good nutrition. When good health and nutrition habits are developed at an early age, they are more likely to continue throughout a person's life.

Teachers may be the only witnesses to the signs of abuse and neglect.

This module also addresses an important but disturbing aspect of keeping children healthy—recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect and reporting them to appropriate authorities. Other than a child's parents, teachers may be the only persons who have ongoing, daily contact with young children. Because you know the children well, you are likely to notice behavioral changes and physical signs that a child's emotional and physical health is in jeopardy. All teachers have the ethical and legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in keeping children healthy. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Promote Wellness and Reduce the Spread of Disease

Check the room daily for adequate ventilation and lighting, comfortable temperature, and sanitary conditions.

Open windows or doors daily to let in fresh air.

Provide tissues, paper towels, soap, and plastic-lined, covered waste containers in places children can reach.

Complete daily health checks and be alert to symptoms of illness throughout the day.

Recognize symptoms of common childhood diseases and stay in regular contact with parents.

Wash your own hands and make sure children wash theirs frequently using the method recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.

Clean and disinfect table surfaces before and after preparing and serving food.

Follow a flexible daily schedule that offers a balance of relaxing and vigorous indoor and outdoor activities.

Ms. Williams enters the room and opens several windows. It is a cool day, so she raises them only a few inches. She checks the area around the children's sink and notices that the soap dispenser is full but the paper towel roll is running out. As she installs a new roll of towels, the children begin to arrive. She greets each child warmly, checking to see if anyone has signs of the cold that several children in the program had. "You have the sniffles today, David. Please blow your nose with a tissue from the box next to the sink," she says. David is having difficulty with this task, so Ms. Williams asks if she can help. "It's hard," he says. "It goes through the tissue!!" She doubles the tissue and helps him blow his nose. After putting the used tissue into the waste can, she says, "Now let's both wash our hands to make sure all the germs are gone."

1. What are three things Ms. Williams did to maintain a sanitary environment?

2. What did Ms. Williams do to keep germs from spreading?

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Helping Children Develop Habits That Promote Good Hygiene and Nutrition

Encourage children to use self-help skills for toileting, handwashing, toothbrushing, and at snack and mealtimes.	"Rochelle, help yourself to some applesauce. Would you like to sprinkle cinnamon on top?"
Model healthy habits, such as handwashing, using tissues, eating nutritious foods, and sanitizing materials and surfaces.	"Uh-oh, here comes a big sneeze! I'd better get a tissue."
Introduce health and hygiene concepts through daily routines, conversations, books, cooking activities, and visiting health professionals.	"Chef Chavez, Hugo's dad, is going to help us make some healthy treats. Before we handle any food, we all need to wash our hands."
Plan and serve nutritious meals and snacks.	"Peaches are in season. Let's serve them for snack one day this week."
Sit with children, "family-style," during snack and meal times to encourage conversation and to model healthy eating habits.	"I've never had tofu before, but I'm going to try some. In Asian countries, people eat it all the time. Joel, would you like to try some?"
Help children recognize when their bodies need a change—rest, some food or water, or movement.	"Kegan, you've been painting all afternoon. How about playing catch with us?"

"What a delicious lunch we're having," says Mr. Lopez. "Nigel, will you please pass me the apples?" Nigel hands the bowl of apple slices to Mr. Lopez, and watches him eat his apple. "These crunchy juicy apples are good for us," Mr. Lopez says as Nigel reaches for his own apple slice. As the children finish lunch, they clear the dishes and wipe their placemats. Then they go to the sink to wash their hands and brush their teeth. Each child uses one squirt of soap, and vigorously washes his or her wrists, hands, and fingers. After drying their hands and tossing the used paper towels in the waste container, the children take their toothbrushes from an egg-carton holder. The brushes are labeled with the children's names and stored in the same slot each day. Mr. Lopez joins the children at the sink. "Remember to brush up and down," he says. Anna watches Mr. Lopez brush his teeth. "I'm brushing my teeth," she says proudly, with toothpaste in the corners of her broad smile. "Me too," says Mr. Lopez. "How do my teeth look?"

1. **What did Mr. Lopez do to help the children develop healthy habits?**

2. **How did the children use their self-help skills to stay healthy?**

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Learn the definitions of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or maltreatment, and neglect.

Recognize the physical and behavioral signs that a child might be a victim of abuse or neglect.

Report suspected child abuse and neglect to authorities according to applicable laws and program policies.

Protect children by reporting suspected abuse or neglect without waiting for proof.

Maintain confidentiality after filing a report of suspected child maltreatment.

Support families and help them get the services they need.

When Carolyn spills juice down the front of her shirt, Ms. Kim quickly moves to help her find a clean shirt. As Carolyn takes off the wet shirt, Ms. Kim sees that the child's back is criss-crossed with loop-shaped bruises. Some look fresh; others seem older. When Ms. Kim asks what happened, Carolyn replies, "I was bad, so I got whipped." Ms. Kim tells Ms. Lee, the director, what she has seen and heard. They discuss the signs of possible child abuse. Ms. Kim decides she must report the incident to Child Protective Services (CPS), the local agency that responds to child abuse and neglect. She writes down her observations and concerns, so this information will be available when she calls CPS. Ms. Lee says, "We both need to keep this situation confidential. I will be here if you need someone to talk to." Ms. Kim calls CPS; she then calls Carolyn's parents to let them know she has filed a report. CPS sends someone to the program to investigate.

1. **What are the signs of possible child abuse in this situation?**

2. **How did Ms. Lee support Ms. Kim?**

Your Own Health and Nutrition

Staying healthy can improve your life.

Most of us know that good health and proper nutrition are important. The national focus on staying fit—which is stressed in the media and at the workplace—has provided much useful information and has led to an increased motivation to stay healthy. We have learned that staying healthy improves the quality of life and can actually prolong life.

Most of us know what to do to stay healthy. When we do what we know is best, we tend to feel better about ourselves. Perhaps you have done some of the following things to maintain wellness.

- Began walking or jogging more often.
- Joined an aerobics class or exercise program.
- Quit smoking or vowed never to start.
- Added more vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products to your diet.
- Lost weight using a sensible diet.
- Began eating more starchy foods and less sugar, fats, and salt.
- Decreased the amount of unnecessary stress in your life.
- Discovered the positive effects of relaxation techniques.

Improve your health and nutrition one step at a time.

You may have found, though, that changing too much too quickly led to failure. Have you found yourself saying these things?

- "I tried to quit smoking but I felt like I was going crazy, and I couldn't stop eating!"
- "I don't have time to jog and still work, take care of my family, and do the gardening."
- "I'd like to serve healthier meals, but they take too long to plan and prepare."

Changing health and nutrition habits can be hard. We may know what to do; but don't actually do it. Blaming ourselves only makes us feel worse. It may help to think in terms of **more** and **less.** Try to do **more** of good things, such as:

- exercising
- eating foods low in fats, salt, and sugar

- getting enough sleep
- spending time with family and friends

Try to do **less** of or **stop** doing unhealthy things, such as:

- smoking
- eating foods high in fat or salt
- drinking alcohol
- letting stress build up

Consider your whole state of well-being—physical, mental, and social—as you answer the questions below. Your answers are personal and don't have to be shared with anyone.

What healthy habits do you want to maintain or improve?

What unhealthy habits do you want to decrease or stop?

How do you think your overall health affects your work?

List three specific steps you will take to stay healthy or change unhealthy habits.

1.

2.

3.

Give yourself the positive support and appreciation you would give your best friend, and you are very likely to succeed!

As a reference, we have included a summary of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and a copy of the "food pyramid." You will find these resources on the following pages.

When you have finished the overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions of the terms used.

Summary of Dietary Guidelines for Americans[1]

Eat a selection of foods daily in adequate amounts.

"Good for you" foods include:

- fruits and vegetables
- whole-grain and enriched breads, cereals, and other foods made from grains
- milk, cheese, yogurt, and other products made from milk
- meats, poultry, fish, eggs, and dried beans and peas

Women and adolescent girls should eat calcium-rich foods, such as milk and milk products, for strong bones. Young children and women should eat iron-rich foods, such as beans, cereals, and grain products.

Maintain healthy weight by eating foods low in calories and high in nutrients.

Eat foods high in fiber and starch, such as whole-grain breads and cereals, dry beans and peas

Have at least three servings of vegetables and two fruits daily.

Have six or more servings of grain products (breads, cereals, pasta, and rice) daily.

Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.

Eat lean meat, fish, poultry, and dried beans and peas as protein sources.

Use skim or low-fat milk and milk products.

Moderate your intake of egg yolks and organ meats.

Limit fats and oils, especially those high in saturated fat, such as butter, cream, lard, heavily hydrogenated fats (some margarine), shortening, and foods with palm and coconut oils.

Trim fat off meats.

Broil, bake, or boil rather than fry.

Read labels carefully to determine both the amount and type of fat present in foods.

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[1] Based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 3rd Edition* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990).

Use sugar in moderation.

Substitute starchy foods for those with large amounts of fats and sugars.

Use less of all sugars and foods containing large amounts of sugars, including white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, honey, and syrups (soft drinks, candies, cakes, and cookies).

Avoid eating sweets between meals. How often you eat sugar and sugar-containing food is even more important to dental health than how much sugar you eat.

Read food labels for clues on sugar content. When the word *sugar, sucrose, glucose, maltose, dextrose, lactose, fructose,* or *syrup* appears first in the listing, sugar is the main ingredient.

Eat fresh fruits, fruits processed without syrup, or fruits processed with light syrup.

Use salt in moderation.

Limit your intake of salty foods such as potato chips, pretzels, salted nuts, popcorn, condiments (soy sauce, steak sauce, garlic salt), pickled foods, cured meats, some cheeses, and some canned vegetables and soups.

Cook without salt or with only small amounts of added salt.

Flavor foods with herbs, spices, and lemon juice.

Add little or no salt to food at the table.

Read food labels carefully to determine the amounts of sodium they contain. Use lower-sodium products when available.

Practice these habits, too.

Increase your physical activity.

Eat slowly.

Take smaller portions.

Say "no" to second helpings.

Drink fewer alcoholic beverages and fewer caffeinated beverages.

Brush with fluoride toothpaste and floss daily.

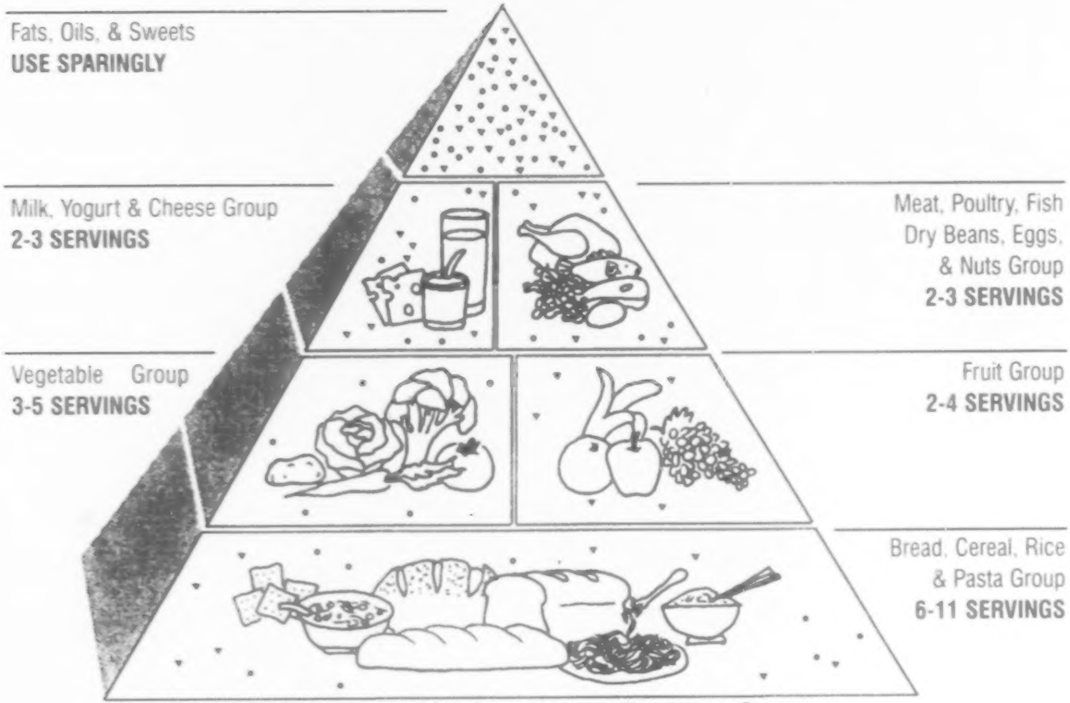
The Food Guide Pyramid

A Guide to Daily Food Choices

KEY

- • Fat (naturally occurring and added)
- ▾ Sugars (naturally occurring and added)

These symbols show that fat and added sugars come mostly from the fats, oils, and sweets group. However, foods in other groups, such as ice cream from the milk group or french fries from the vegetable group, can also be a source of fat and added sugars.


Fats, Oils, & Sweets
USE SPARINGLY
Milk, Yogurt & Cheese Group
2-3 SERVINGS
Meat, Poultry, Fish
Dry Beans, Eggs,
& Nuts Group
2-3 SERVINGS
Vegetable Group
3-5 SERVINGS
Fruit Group
2-4 SERVINGS
Bread, Cereal, Rice
& Pasta Group
6-11 SERVINGS

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Agriculture/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to make sure children are healthy. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Promote Wellness and Reduce the Spread of Disease

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Check the room daily for adequate ventilation and lighting, comfortable temperature, and sanitary conditions.	☐	☐	☐
2. Open windows or doors daily to let in fresh air.	☐	☐	☐
3. Provide tissues, paper towels, soap, and plastic-lined, covered waste containers in places children can reach.	☐	☐	☐
4. Complete daily health checks and be alert to symptoms of illness throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐
5. Recognize symptoms of common childhood diseases and stay in regular contact with parents.	☐	☐	☐
6. Wash your own hands and make sure children wash theirs frequently using the method recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.	☐	☐	☐
7. Clean and disinfect table surfaces before and after preparing and serving food.	☐	☐	☐
8. Follow a flexible daily schedule that offers a balance of relaxing and vigorous indoor and outdoor activities.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Develop Habits That Promote Good Hygiene and Nutrition

	I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
9.	Encourage children to use self-help skills for toileting, handwashing, toothbrushing, and at snack and mealtimes.	☐	☐	☐
10.	Model healthy habits, such as handwashing, using tissues, eating nutritious foods, and sanitizing materials and surfaces.	☐	☐	☐
11.	Introduce health and hygiene concepts through daily routines, conversations, books, cooking activities, and visiting health professionals.	☐	☐	☐
12.	Plan and serve nutritious meals and snacks.	☐	☐	☐
13.	Sit with children, "family-style," during snack and meal times to encourage conversation and to model healthy eating habits.	☐	☐	☐
14.	Help children recognize when their bodies need a change—rest, some food or water, or movement.	☐	☐	☐

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

15.	Learn the definitions of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or maltreatment, and neglect.	☐	☐	☐
16.	Recognize the physical and behavioral signs that a child might be a victim of abuse or neglect.	☐	☐	☐

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

(continued)

	I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
17. Report suspected child abuse and neglect to authorities according to applicable laws and program policies.		☐	☐	☐
18. Protect children by reporting suspected abuse or neglect without waiting for proof.		☐	☐	☐
19. Maintain confidentiality after filing a report of suspected child maltreatment.		☐	☐	☐
20. Support families and help them get the services they need.		☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 2, Healthy.

Learning Activities

I. Maintaining a Hygienic Environment

In this activity you will learn to:

- Keep the environment sanitary throughout the day
- Use and teach children to use the Centers for Disease Control handwashing procedures

What can you do to maintain a hygienic environment? First, you can check your classroom daily to make sure it is clean and uncluttered. Even when custodial staff clean your facility, you should do a daily check. Report any problems to your supervisor. It is your job to make sure that your room promotes wellness and minimizes the incidence of illness and disease.

It's important to keep the room clean and sanitary throughout the day. You do this by cleaning spills as they happen, disinfecting tables before and after eating or after the classroom pet has been for a walk; storing food in covered containers and at temperatures that reduce spoilage; and throwing away garbage promptly. You can invite children to assist with these chores and keep tissues, sponges, and paper towels within their reach. In addition, you must ensure that your room is sanitary.

Sanitary Procedures

Sick children can leave bacteria, parasites, and viruses on tables, materials, and equipment or these sources of germs can grow on perishable foods. Most diseases contracted by children are highly contagious; when one child is sick, the germs will very likely be passed on to the others. Diseases can be spread through bodily secretions (when a child sneezes), by direct contact (when children share food), and even when a child seems perfectly healthy (when a child is coming down with chicken pox). Therefore, everyone at the program must follow sanitary procedures to protect children's health.

To disinfect toys and equipment, begin by thoroughly washing surfaces with soap and water. Next, rinse with water to remove the soap solution. Then apply the appropriate bleach solution as described in the chart that follows, made fresh daily. Wait for one minute, then rinse. Finally, allow the surface of objects to air dry or wipe them with a clean towel. Wash and disinfect toys, equipment, furniture, and surfaces touched by children (floors, doorknobs, shelves) at least weekly. Some programs put washable toys in the dishwasher instead of applying the bleach solution. When using this method, use the complete dishwashing cycle and wash the toys separately from dishes.

Use a bleach solution to disinfect surfaces and materials.

Use This Bleach Solution	To Clean These Items
1/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water or 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart of water	All surfaces except play materials, including: tabletops and counters; bathroom; walls; door frames; and mops, brooms, and dustpans used to wipe up body fluid spills.
1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 gallon of water or 1 teaspoon of bleach to 1 quart of water	All play materials and objects children have put in their mouths.

Sanitize cots and bedding regularly.

To prevent the spread of disease, children should have their own bedding for napping. Individual sheets, pillows and pillowcases, and blankets, should be labeled with the child's name, and stored separately so they aren't touching another child's bedding. Sheets and pillowcases should be laundered at least once a week by parents or at the program and blankets should be laundered monthly. When bedding items get soiled or wet, place them in plastic bags or other closed containers until they can be washed at the program or sent home with parents. Washable mats or cots children use each day should be sanitized at least weekly and whenever soiled or wet. If mats or cots are used by different children each day they must be disinfected daily. You can further reduce the spread of respiratory infections by setting up cots at least three feet apart. Sleeping mats and cots should be stored so that the sleeping surfaces do not touch each other.

Keep bathrooms well-stocked with soap and paper towels.

Bathrooms and classroom sinks are major sources of germs. Check them daily to make sure they are clean and well-stocked with soap and paper supplies. It is easier and more sanitary for preschool children to use liquid soap in a dispenser than to use bar soap, which is slippery and can harbor germs. Hang dispensers for paper towels, tissues, and toilet paper within children's reach. Refill the soap dispensers, paper towels, tissues, and toilet paper if these items are stored in or near the bathroom. After use by a child or teacher, throw all paper products into washable trash containers lined with plastic bags. Trash containers with lids operated by food pedals are ideal, because children don't have to touch any germ-ridden surfaces.

Never use the same sink for toothbrushing and cleaning up body fluids.

Typically, children use classroom sinks for brushing teeth and for handwashing. Store toothbrushes in sanitary containers that allow for air drying. You can make a suitable container by cutting slots in a Styrofoam egg carton turned upside down or in a plastic milk container. Paper egg cartons are not appropriate because they cannot be washed. Sinks used by children should never be used to clean anything toxic or for any items that have been contaminated by bodily fluids such as urine, blood, or vomitus. If your program enrolls more than 30 children, you should have a large sink for rinsing soiled mops, clothing, and toys.

Many early childhood classrooms have a fish-filled aquarium or a small pet such as a gerbil or hamster. Children learn important health, nutrition, and other concepts by observing and helping to care for pets. Classroom pets should be in good health and have necessary shots on regular basis. Cages should have removable bottoms that can be cleaned and sanitized. Store food for animals in closed containers, out of children's reach. Invite children to help feed pets and give them fresh water daily. Children and adults should wash their hands immediately after handling pets, cages, food bowls, water bottles, and wastes.

Caring for pets is an excellent way to learn about healthy practices.

Handwashing Procedures[2]

Health professionals state that the most effective way to reduce illness is for teachers and children to wash their hands frequently and properly throughout the day. Good handwashing techniques reduce the spread of disease in child care by 50 percent and protect adults and children from serious illnesses.

Wash your own hands:

- before the first child arrives
- before preparing or serving food
- before and after handling body secretions (for example, wiping your nose or a child's, helping a child who is vomiting, helping stop a nose bleed)
- before and after administering medication
- before and after helping a child use the toilet
- after using the bathroom yourself
- after helping a child who may have a contagious condition
- after handling and caring for pets

Make sure children wash their hands:

- when they arrive
- before and after cooking activities

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[2] Based on Centers for Disease Control, *What You Should Know About Contagious Diseases in the Day Care Setting* (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control, 1984).

- before and after eating
- after using the toilet
- after wiping their noses
- after a nose bleed
- after vomiting
- after handling and caring for pets
- after touching a child who may have a contagious condition
- before participating in water play
- after outdoor play

The Centers for Disease Control recommends using the following procedures for handwashing. Teach them to children and have children follow them each time they wash their hands.

- Use soap and running water.
- Rub your hands vigorously as you wash them.
- Wash all surfaces: backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails.
- Rinse your hands well. Leave the water running.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel. Throw away the towel.
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you use a checklist to determine which of your program's hygiene routines are satisfactory and which need improvement. Next, you plan ways to improve routines to make sure the program environment promotes wellness and reduces the spread of disease.

Health and Hygiene Checklist

Date: ____________________

Routines to Maintain a Healthy Environment	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
1. Let in fresh air daily by opening windows or doors.	☐	☐
2. Check the room daily to make sure it is clean.	☐	☐
3. Store toothbrushes so they don't touch each other and can air dry.	☐	☐
4. Have children brush their teeth after eating meals and snacks.	☐	☐
5. Wipe off tables after eating and messy activities.	☐	☐
6. Date, label, and store food so it does not spoil.	☐	☐
7. Put garbage in metal or plastic pails—with lids—lined with plastic bags. Empty the pails at least daily.	☐	☐
8. Keep tissues, paper towels, and soap where children can reach them.	☐	☐
9. Check the bathroom daily to make sure it is clean and well-stocked with toilet paper, soap, and paper towels.	☐	☐
10. Follow a flexible daily schedule to meet children's needs for activity and rest.	☐	☐
11. Call parents to come and pick up a sick child, and separate the child from others.	☐	☐
12. Ensure children's linens are laundered weekly and blankets are laundered monthly.	☐	☐
13. Prepare fresh bleach solution daily.	☐	☐
14. Wash and disinfect play materials at least weekly and more often if needed.	☐	☐
15. Rinse brooms, dustpans, mops, and rags in a bleach solution after cleaning body fluid spills.	☐	☐

Routines to Maintain a Healthy Environment	**Satisfactory**	**Needs Improvement**
16. Wash your own hands:		
• before the first child arrives	☐	☐
• before preparing or serving food	☐	☐
• before and after handling bodily secretions (for example, wiping your nose or a child's, helping a child who is vomiting, helping stop a nose bleed)	☐	☐
• before and after administering medication	☐	☐
• before and after helping a child use the toilet	☐	☐
• after using the bathroom yourself	☐	☐
• after caring for a child who may have a contagious condition	☐	☐
• after handling and caring for pets	☐	☐
17. Make sure children wash their hands:		
• when they arrive	☐	☐
• before and after cooking activities	☐	☐
• before and after eating	☐	☐
• before participating in water play	☐	☐
• after using the toilet	☐	☐
• after wiping their noses	☐	☐
• after a nose bleed	☐	☐
• after vomiting	☐	☐
• after handling and caring for pets	☐	☐
• after touching a child who may have a contagious condition	☐	☐
• after outdoor play	☐	☐

List the items you found in need of improvement on the chart that follows. Then describe the improvement strategies you plan to use.

Items Needing Improvement	Improvement Strategies

Discuss these improvement strategies with your colleagues and your trainer. Make the needed changes in your routines, and check them off when they have been completed.

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II. Responding When Children Are Sick

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize symptoms of common childhood illness
- Follow your program's policies regarding sick children

Conduct daily health checks to look for signs of illness.

Children may come to the program with mild illnesses and may be contagious before they develop symptoms. A daily health check upon arrival will help you assess children's health status and determine who may be ill. Depending on your program's policies, children with certain symptoms may have to go home. As you greet children and parents, be alert for the following signs of illness:

- difficulty breathing
- yellowish skin or eyes
- unusual spots or rashes
- feverish appearance
- severe coughing (red or blue in the face, high-pitched croup or whooping sound)
- pinkeye (tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, swelling, discharge of pus)
- infected skin patches or crusty, bright-yellow, dry, or gummy skin areas
- unusual behavior (child is cranky, less active or more irritable than usual; child feels general discomfort or just seems unwell)

Children may become sick while at the program.

During the day, be alert for signs a child might be ill:

- frequent trips to the bathroom
- uncontrolled diarrhea
- complaints about difficulties going to the bathroom
- oral temperature of 101 degrees or higher
- sore throat or trouble swallowing
- headache or stiff neck

- nausea and vomiting
- loss of appetite
- frequent scratching of the body or scalp (may be a sign of lice or scabies)

Some of these symptoms are indicators of contagious illness, as summarized in the chart on contagious diseases[3]. The chart describes the symptoms and incubation periods for common childhood illness. If a child exhibits any of these symptoms, separate him or her from the other children. Inform your supervisor and contact the child's parents. It is a good idea to designate an area where sick children can rest and be cared for until taken home.

When a child has a severe cold, uncontrolled diarrhea, or a contagious illness as noted in the chart, he or she should not attend the program. Ask parents to inform you if their child or any family member has recently been exposed to or diagnosed with a contagious illness. Explain that you need this information to take necessary precautions to prevent the illness from spreading. Also, you may need this information to report certain communicable diseases to your local and state health authorities.

Diseases spread through the intestinal tract	Symptoms	When child can return to the program
Diarrheal diseases	Excess of liquid in stools and five or more stools in an 8-hour period	The child no longer has diarrhea, or, if due to infection, 24 hours after treatment has begun
Vomiting	Abdominal pain, digested/undigested stomach contents, refusal to eat, headache, fever	When vomiting has stopped
Hepatitis A	Fever, loss of appetite, nausea, yellowish skin and whites of the eyes, dark brown urine, light-colored stool	One week after illness begins, if fever is gone
Hepatitis B	Fever, yellowing of skin and whites of eyes, loss of appetite, nausea, joint pains, rash, weakness	When fever is gone, skin lesions are dry or covered, and child can participate in program

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[3] Based on Centers for Disease Control, *What You Should Know About Contagious Diseases in the Day Care Setting* (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control, December 1984), and Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, *Model Child Care Health Policies* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, December 1993).

Diseases spread through the respiratory system	Symptoms	When child can return to the program
Bacterial meningitis	For younger children: fever, vomiting, unusual irritability, excessive crying with inability to be comforted, high-pitched crying, poor feeding, and activity levels below normal For older children: fever, headache, neck pain or stiffness, vomiting (often without abdominal complaints), decrease in activity, and complaints of not feeling well	After fever has gone and a closely supervised program of antibiotics has been completed Health Department may recommend preventive medicine for exposed children and staff
Colds and flu	Colds: stuffy or runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, coughing, watery eyes, and perhaps a fever Flu: sore throat, fever, muscular aches, and chills	When coughing has subsided, fever is gone, and child can participate in daily activities
Strep throat	Red and painful throat, often accompanied by fever	Generally when fever has subsided and child has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours

Diseases spread by direct contact (touching)	Symptoms	When child can return to the program
Chicken pox	Fever, runny nose, cough, rash (pink/red blisters)	Six days after onset of rash or when lesions are crusted and dry
Head lice	Whitish-gray dots attached to hair shafts	After treatment and child's clothes and bedding have been washed in hot water (140° F) to destroy lice and eggs
Impetigo	Red oozing erosion capped with a golden yellow crust that appears stuck on	Twenty-four hours after treatment has begun
Scabies	Crusty wavy ridges and tunnels in the webs of fingers, hand, wrist, and trunk	Twenty-four hours after treatment has begun
Measles	Fever, runny nose, cough, and red-brown blotchy rash on the face and	Six days after the rash appears

Diseases spread by direct contact (touching)	Symptoms	When child can return to the program
Mumps	Swelling of the glands at the jaw angle accompanied by cold-like symptoms	After swelling subsides or nine days after swelling begins
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Cold-like symptoms that develop into severe respiratory disease with repeated attacks of violent coughing	Three weeks after intense coughing begins or five days after antibiotic treatment has begun
Ring worm	Skin: reddish scaling, circular patches with raised edges and central clearing or light and dark patches on face and upper trunk or cracking peeling of skin between toes Scalp: redness, scaling of scalp with broken hairs or patches of hair loss.	Twenty-four hours after treatment is begun
Pinkeye, Conjunctivitis	Eyes are pink/red, watery, itchy, lid swollen, sometimes painful	Twenty-four hours after treatment is begun

Administering Medication

Children may need to take medication during the day as treatment for an illness or an ongoing condition. *The National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Out of Home Child Care Programs* recommends that early childhood programs administer only those prescribed or ordered by a health care provider for a specific child. For non-prescription medications, parents must provide written permission referencing the health care provider's written or phone instructions. All medications should be in the original dated container with a child-protective cap. They must include instructions for use and disposal and be labeled with the child's name and that of the health care provider. Refrigerate medications when appropriate, storing them away from food and out of children's reach.

When administering medications, follow your program's policies and procedures. Be sure to read carefully the instructions so you are clear about the required dosage. Never administer one child's medication to another. Keep accurate records noting the child's name, the date and time, and the name and amount of medication administered.

What Teachers Need to Know About HIV

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV attacks the white blood cells in the immune system that normally protect the body from viruses and bacteria. This makes it difficult and gradually impossible for the body to fight off infection.

HIV is not transmitted through casual contact or from being around someone who is infected. It cannot be transmitted by mosquitoes or pets. The virus does not live by itself in the air. You cannot get it by:

- being in the same room with someone;
- sharing drinks or food;
- being near when someone coughs or sneezes;
- hugging, shaking hands, or kissing as friends do;
- sharing a swimming pool, bath, or toilet; or
- sharing bed linens or towels.

HIV is transmitted in several ways.

HIV is transmitted through blood, semen, and vaginal secretions. A person **can** become infected in the following ways:

From mother to child (perinatal) during pregnancy or delivery. If the mother has HIV, her blood can transmit the virus to the baby during pregnancy or delivery. Most children under age 13 with HIV are infected in this way. Because HIV has been found in breast milk, mothers with HIV infection are discouraged from breast-feeding.

Through sexual intercourse with a man or woman who has HIV. Sexually abused children are at risk for HIV infection.

By sharing or getting stuck with intravenous needles that contain infected blood from a previous user.

From blood and blood product transfusions prior to 1985, before blood was tested for HIV infection. Many children were infected this way, including those with hemophilia.

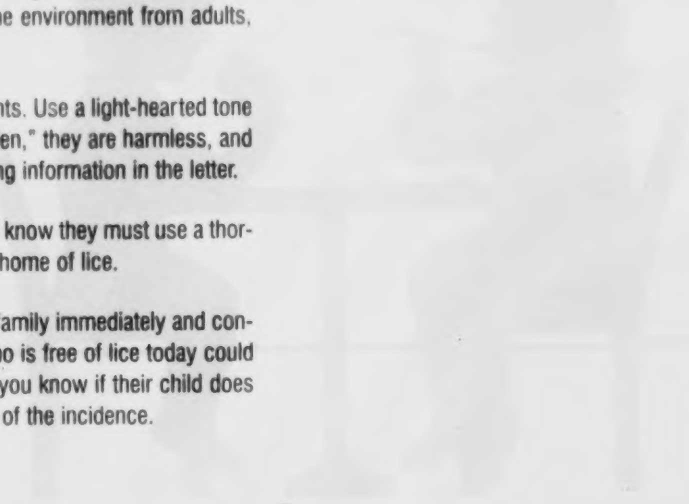
Children with HIV infection may have special nutrition and therapy needs, but they can remain healthy for long periods of time. Because they are more susceptible to germs, good hygiene is very important. Since HIV is carried in the blood, you should **always** create a "barrier" between yourself and any person's blood when cleaning a cut or applying pressure to a bloody nose. A towel, rolled cloth, paper towel, or disposable gloves can be a barrier. If you are caring for a child with HIV infection, find out if training is available to help you learn how to meet the child's specific needs.

Lice Happen!

Even when you and your colleagues practice good hygiene, you may experience an outbreak of head lice—tiny brown parasites that make themselves at home on people's heads. Adult lice lay three to four eggs (nits) a day on human hair strands, about 3/4" from the scalp. Ten days later the eggs hatch, and nymphs emerge and begin to bite the scalp. These bites make a person's head itch. If you see a child scratching his or her head repeatedly (or if your own head itches), look for lice—either tiny white nits attached to strands of hair, or the adult lice moving around. Nits, unlike dandruff, do not move when the hair is moved.

Do not panic! Lice are quite common, do not carry diseases, and are not caused by unsanitary conditions. They are, however, extremely hardy. They have a 30-day life cycle and are easily transferred from one person to another—either from head to head or from pillows, rugs, seat backs, combs, bedding, hats, and so on. You need to respond immediately to rid the children and the environment from adults, eggs, and nymphs.

A joint home and program response is needed to get rid of lice.



Your first step in lice removal is to send a letter to parents. Use a light-hearted tone for the letter to parents. Let them know that "lice happen," they are harmless, and there is nothing to be ashamed of. Include the following information in the letter.

A description of the life-cycle of lice: Parents need to know they must use a thorough and vigorous approach to ridding their child and home of lice.

How to identify lice: Ask parents to check the whole family immediately and continue checking over the next few weeks. Someone who is free of lice today could still get them after the eggs hatch. Ask parents to let you know if their child does have so lice so you can keep track of the seriousness of the incidence.

What to do about lice on human heads: Tell parents to call their pediatrician for information on appropriate anti-lice shampoos for children and adults. They should follow the shampoo directions carefully, then use a fine-toothed comb to remove the dead adults and nits.

How to rid the home of lice: Explain that lice travel to bedding, clothing, stuffed animals, combs and brushes, carpets, and furniture. These items can be dry cleaned or washed in water that is at least 140° F. Items that are difficult to clean such as stuffed animals can be placed in sealed plastic bags for 35 days—5 days beyond the life cycle. Combs and brushes can be washed in anti-lice shampoo. Carpets, mattresses, and furniture should be thoroughly vacuumed and the vacuum bags tied in plastic and placed in outside trash cans.

You can use the lice outbreak as a "teachable moment."

An equally thorough response is needed at the program. Begin by checking all staff so they can use anti-lice shampoo and take steps to rid their homes of lice. Let the children know about the lice. Describe your lice removal plans. Explain that lice are harmless and not caused by anyone being dirty or careless. Remind children not to share combs, brushes, or hats.

Next, use the methods described above to clean all the items at the program to which lice may have attached. In addition to items listed already, you must clean dress-up clothes (especially hats), carpet squares, pillows, and mattresses. Send home children's bedding and special blankets and stuffed animals to be cleaned by parents.

Once you have survived your first outbreak of lice, you will be better prepared to tackle the next—and there will be one. As long as children are cared for in groups, lice are likely to follow. Lice have probably been around longer than humans, and may outlive us all.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review your program's policies regarding sick children and contagious illnesses. Next you read several brief vignettes and apply your program's policies in response to questions about how to handle the situations.

How Would Your Program Respond?

Rina's Chicken Pox

Rina returned to the program this morning after a brief bout with chicken pox. Her first spots came out seven days ago. Most of her sores have dried up, but a few are still oozing. Her father hands the teacher a bottle of calamine lotion and says, "Rina knows how to put this on, but we ran out of cotton balls. Can you give her some cotton balls to use?"

How would your program respond?

Pam's Sore Throat

Pam and Kelly travel to and from the program together each day. Today Kelly's father drove the car pool. After Kelly's father had dropped off the girls and left for work, their teacher notices that Pam looks flushed and her eyes are watering. When asked how she's feeling, Pam says her throat hurts a lot.

How would your program respond?

Marty's Head of Lice

When Marty's mother comes to pick him up Wednesday afternoon, his teacher tells her that Marty and several children have lice. The mother responds, "Well, I don't have time to deal with lice tonight. It will have to wait until the weekend. See you tomorrow."

How would your program respond?

Protecting a Family's Privacy

At a private meeting, a parent shares with the program director the news that her child has been diagnosed with HIV. She asks her to keep this information confidential.

How would your program respond?

Discuss your responses with your trainer.

III. *Encouraging Good Nutrition*

In this activity you will learn to:

- Teach children that healthy bodies need a variety of foods every day
- Help children select and enjoy nutritious foods for snacks and meals

Preschool children can learn about nutrition.

Teaching children good nutrition habits is a wise investment in their future. The foods children eat affect their well-being, physical growth, ability to learn, and overall behavior. Attitudes about food develop early in life and are difficult to change. Eating moderately, eating a variety foods, and eating in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. Teachers can help children enjoy a variety of foods from their own and other cultures, and to learn what their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy.

Some adults make the mistake of using food to reward or punish children. This is not a good practice because it may promote poor eating habits that continue into adulthood. When an adult tells a child, "You can't have dessert because you didn't eat your peas," the child learns that desserts are more desirable than peas. Children should be learning that it is best to eat a variety of nutritious foods.

Much of the health and nutrition education that takes place at an early childhood programs is indirect. It occurs when you serve a variety of healthy foods for snacks and meals, share relaxed, family-style meals, taste all the foods served and encourage children to do the same, and offer cooking as an interest area or activity. Children can also learn about healthy foods by talking with a visiting nutritionist or planting a vegetable garden.

The USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program supports healthy nutrition.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides funds which partially reimburse food costs to licensed public and nonprofit child care centers for nutritious meals and snacks served to children through age 12. For-profit child care centers can participate if they receive Title XX funding for at least 25 percent of the children enrolled. Meals and snacks served in programs enrolled in the CACFP must meet USDA guidelines for meal components and quantities.

To ensure that children receive nutritious snacks and meals, some foods may not be claimed for reimbursement. This requirement encourages programs to serve muffins rather than cakes, fresh vegetables rather than potato chips, and milk or juice rather than flavored drinks. The CACFP also provides training on topics such as nutrition, menu planing, family-style meals, sanitation, and using a variety of recipes. Ask the director if your program is enrolled in the CACFP. If not, suggest contacting your regional office of USDA to find out more about the benefits of enrolling in the CACFP.

Nutritious foods are good for both bodies and teeth.

An important topic related to nutrition is dental health. Almost everyone (98 percent of the population) gets cavities. Most children know sweet, sticky foods can cause cavities. However, children may not realize that, to prevent tooth decay, they must cut down on the number of times a day they eat sugary foods. It is always a good idea to have children brush their teeth after eating the foods listed below.

- peanut butter
- crackers
- bananas
- dried fruits (apricots, prunes, figs, raisins)
- bread (except 100% whole wheat)
- canned fruit packed in syrup

Although these foods are nutritious, they do stick to the teeth.

Serving and Eating Family-Style Meals

One way to make meal times relaxed and pleasant is to serve and eat meals family-style. This means that a teacher sits with a group of children at each table. Everyone eats the same foods, serves themselves, and enjoys pleasant conversation. During family-style dining, children are more likely to try new foods because they serve themselves. They can decide for themselves whether to put one pea or a spoonful on their plates. The following tips can help you begin or enhance family-style dining.[4]

Try these suggestions before the meal.

- Plan a menu including nutritious foods, including dessert fresh fruit, blueberry muffins, applesauce, fruit juice, or cornbread.
- Arrange the furniture so tables are far enough apart to walk between but close enough for quiet conversation.
- Plan to seat five or six children and one adult at each table.
- Ask children who are assisting to set the tables.
- Serve the food in serving bowls or on platters.
- Serve drinks in small pitchers so children can pour their own.
- Leave the salt and sugar off the table.
- Suggest that before eating, everyone take a deep breath, relax, and think about how the food will make them strong and healthy.

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[4] Based on Elaine McLaughlin, Nancy Goldsmith, and Peter Pizzolongo, *Living and Teaching Nutrition* (College Park, MD: Head Start Resource and Training Center, 1983), p. 5-D.

Try these suggestions during the meal.

- Invite children and teachers to begin serving as soon as everyone is seated.
- Maintain a leisurely pace so children don't feel hurried.
- Allow children to refuse food, but encourage them to taste a little of everything.
- Encourage children to serve themselves only as much as they can eat. If they can't finish what's on their plate, don't force them.
- Model good hygiene, safety practices, and manners.
- Ask children to clean up their own spills.
- Encourage conversation about the foods served, the day's events, or other topics of interest to the children.
- Respect cultural traditions and beliefs regarding mealtime rituals. For example, in some cultures, a respectful silence is appropriate before the meal begins and talking during meals is considered inappropriate.

Try these suggestions after the meal.

- Keep a calm and relaxed manner.
- Allow children to leave the table when finished. They can clean their dishes, wash their hands, brush their teeth, then choose an activity.
- Ask the children who are assisting to help clean up and wash the tables.

Cooking With Children[5]

Cooking is one of the best ways to teach children about nutrition. Although the children may not know about vitamins or saturated fats, spreading a vegetable cottage cheese dip on whole wheat crackers, and mashing bananas for muffins gives much healthier messages than opening a package of chocolate cookies or a bag of corn chips.

Cooking provides many opportunities for learning.

Through cooking activities children develop self-help skills, improve fine-muscle coordination, increase cognitive skills, socialize with friends, and share in the responsibilities of daily living. They are proud to help with the real work of snapping the ends off beans, cracking eggs, and stirring raisins and cinnamon into yogurt to make a dip. Your job is to encourage each child to participate according to his or her interest and skill level.

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[5] Adapted with permission from Diane T. Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum® for Family Child Care* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1991), pp. 196, 198.

Here are some examples of the many learning opportunities that might take place during a cooking activity—making bread:

- learning what ingredients help make the bread nutritious (whole wheat flour, sunflower seeds, and nonfat dry milk);
- gaining a foundation in math (doubling the recipe so it will make two loaves);
- understanding scientific principles (observing how yeast makes the bread rise);
- expressing creativity (braiding loaves or making animal shapes);
- working cooperatively (taking turns sifting the flour);
- developing responsibility (remembering to punch down the dough when the timer goes off);
- showing consideration for others (making room at the table for another baker);
- learning self-help skills (washing the dishes while the bread is rising);
- strengthening hand muscles (kneading the dough);
- coordinating eye and hand movements (carefully measuring the ingredients);
- having fun (enjoying cooking and eating as a group); and
- showing pride (wrapping up several pieces of bread to take home to their families).

It is not necessary to plan special menus or use simplified versions of recipes to include children in cooking. The snacks and meals children cook can be part of the regular menu for the program. Here are some simple cooking activities preschool children might enjoy.

Children might enjoy making these simple foods.

Mashed potatoes. Children can peel potatoes, cut them into pieces, drop them into the cooking pot, and mash them after they cool.

Fresh vegetables and fruit—cooked or served raw with dips. Children can grate carrots, slice apples, shell peas, wash grapes, break the flowerettes off cauliflower or broccoli, and snap the ends off beans.

Fruit smoothies. Children can use a blender to mix milk and/or yogurt with fresh fruits such as bananas, strawberries, peaches, or whatever is in season.

French toast. It's fun to crack eggs, add the milk, and beat the mixture until it's smooth. Children can sprinkle in some cinnamon, then dip pieces of bread into the mixture. An electric fry pan will hold four to six pieces of bread.

Lemonade. Have children roll fresh lemons on the table top, then twist them on the juicer. Add some sugar and water to taste. Slice a lemon to put in the pitcher.

Pizzas. Spoon tomato sauce and sprinkle grated cheese and spices on crusts made from English muffins, French bread, pita bread, bagels, tortillas, or freshly made dough.

Children can follow picture recipe cards.

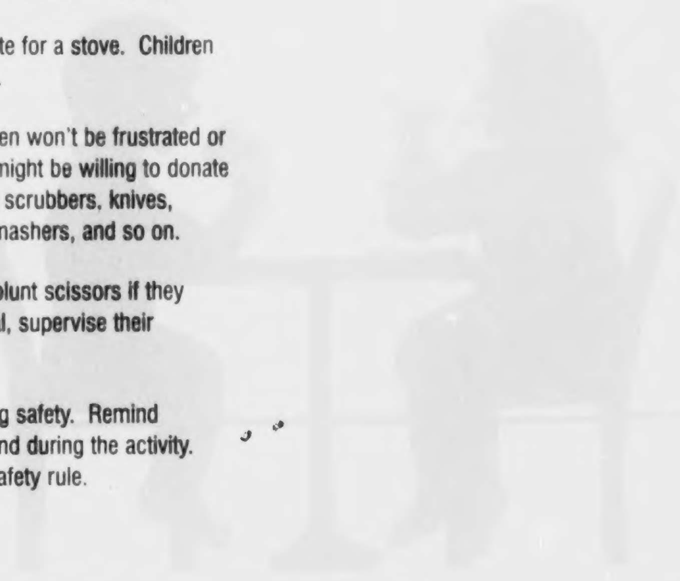
You might want to transfer some recipes to picture cards. On 5" x 8" pieces of cardboard, describe and illustrate each step in the recipe. Number each card so the steps in the recipe are easy to follow. Cover the cards with clear Contact paper to protect them from spills. Children can lay out the picture cards left to right on the table so they can follow the recipe one step at a time. This will make them feel more independent and confident about what they're doing.

You can also ask the children's parents to suggest cooking projects. By cooking their favorite foods, you show respect for children and their families. This also allows you to introduce the concept of family traditions into your program.

Try these suggestions.

Here are some suggestions to help make cooking a success:

- Use a work table that is no taller in height than the children's waists.
- Set up the table near a sink or have water on hand. If a blender or electric frying pan is used, make sure there is an electrical outlet that can be reached without an extension cord. An adult should plug and unplug appliances. Hang the cords behind the table so children don't trip.
- Use an electric frying pan or wok as a substitute for a stove. Children can use these appliances easily on a low table.
- Provide duplicates of favorite utensils so children won't be frustrated or lose interest while waiting for a turn. Parents might be willing to donate their duplicates of vegetable peelers, vegetable scrubbers, knives, spoons, graters, sifters, hand beaters, potato mashers, and so on.
- Provide knives with plastic serrated blades or blunt scissors if they will do the job. When steel knives are essential, supervise their use carefully.
- Make and display signs and posters on cooking safety. Remind children of safety guidelines before you start and during the activity. Comment when you see children following a safety rule.



- Provide aprons or smocks made of old shirts for all children. Much of the pleasure in cooking comes from rigorously stirring batter and enthusiastically beating eggs. Messes are inevitable.

- Keep cleaning supplies such as mops, sponges, and paper towels with in children's reach. Lock up cleansers.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you plan and conduct a cooking activity. First, select a recipe, and make picture recipe cards. Then, gather ingredients and equipment, and invite interested children to prepare the food. After conducting this activity complete the blank form that follows. Begin by reading the example that follows.

Cooking with Children

(Example)

Children: *Carlos, Deena, Troy* **Ages:** *4 to 4 1/2* **Date:** *April 23*

What you made: *Cheese burritos*

How did you involve the children in the cooking activity?

I set up the cheese burrito recipe cards on the table next to the electric fry pan. I laid out the ingredients—flour tortillas, cheese, oil for the pan, salsa—and utensils—cheese graters, spatulas, spoons, pot holders, knives, and so on. Carlos came over first. He wanted to grate some cheese. While I was showing him how to hold the grater so he wouldn't grate his fingers, Deena and Troy joined us. They wanted their own graters and cheese. I had plenty of equipment so the children didn't have to wait.

Deena and Troy followed the recipe cards. Carlos kept asking me what to do next.

What did the children learn from this activity?

Cheese melts when it is heated.

How to use the grater.

Deena and Troy tasted a new food—the salsa.

We talked about the ingredients in tortillas and how they are made, even though we used store-bought ones.

We talked about how eating cheese helps children develop strong bodies.

When you repeat this activity, what changes, if any, would you make?

I would put out some other ingredients in case children wanted to invent different kinds of burritos.

I would simplify the recipe cards—they were too detailed for Carlos to follow.

Cooking with Children

Children: ______________________ **Ages:** ______________ **Date:** _______

What you made: ____

How did you involve the children in the cooking activity?

What did the children learn from this activity?

When you repeat this activity, what changes, if any, would you make?

Discuss your answers with your trainer and the children's parents. Give the parents concrete suggestions for cooking with their children at home.

IV. Helping Children Learn Healthy Habits

In this activity you will learn to:

- Be a model for healthy habits during daily routines and activities
- Help children learn how to keep themselves healthy

Children learn good health habits through routines.

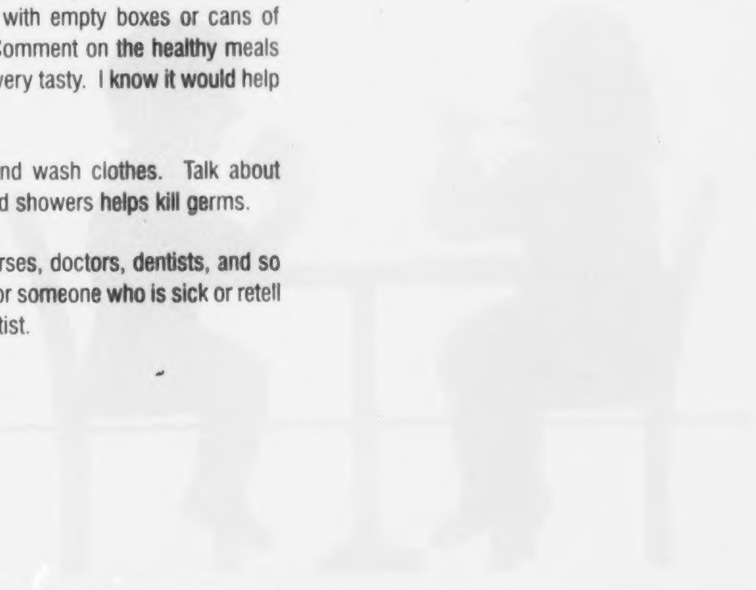
The first step in teaching children good health habits is to practice them daily in your classroom. Through routines such as regular toothbrushing, frequent handwashing, using and discarding tissues, and careful food handling, children can learn good health habits. Encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves—pumping soap in their hands, squeezing toothpaste on a toothbrush, setting the table, serving themselves, dressing for outdoor play. In addition, invite children to help you maintain a healthy environment. Although you don't want to expose children to toxic cleaning substances, they can wipe the table after you spray it with a bleach solution. They can shake out a new plastic bag for the waste can or help you empty and clean the tray at the bottom of the hamster's cage. After completing routines such as these, be sure that everyone washes their hands.

During the day you can also help children learn good health habits as they play and participate in activities. Here are some suggestions.

Dramatic play. Provide props such as a cot, stethoscope, bandages and a white jacket so children can set up a hospital or dentist's office. This is particularly appropriate if one of the children or a friend or family member is ill or will be going to the hospital for an operation in the near future. Children might also rehearse upcoming visits to the doctor or dentist for check-ups and immunizations. Ask the children open-ended questions to help them recall what they know from their own experiences. In addition, stock the house corner with empty boxes or cans of healthy foods and pretend fruits and vegetables. Comment on the healthy meals children are preparing. "Your vegetable soup looks very tasty. I know it would help me stay strong and healthy."

Water play. Encourage children to bathe dolls and wash clothes. Talk about different parts of the body and how taking baths and showers helps kill germs.

Puppet shows. Suggest that puppets represent nurses, doctors, dentists, and so on. Invite children to make up stories about caring for someone who is sick or retell what happened when they visited the doctor or dentist.



Special events. Visit a farm to pick berries or learn about where food comes from. Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the supermarket. Invite a health professional to talk to the children about taking good care of themselves. Ask a parent and a new baby to visit the program and discuss what babies need to grow and develop.

Books. Read and plan follow-up activities for books such as *Stone Soup*, by M. Brown, *Morris Has a Cold*, by Bernard Wiseman, *Bread and Jam for Frances*, by Russell Hoban, and *Clean as a Whistle*, by Aileen Fisher. You and the children can make books about topics such as dressing for the weather or preparing a special meal.

Table toys. Make lotto or bingo games featuring pictures of food or healthy routines. Have children put together puzzles featuring body parts, health providers, farms, and supermarkets.

Art activities. Trace children's bodies on large pieces of newsprint and invite them to draw the features—such as hair, nails, and eyes—and clothing. Make collages about "healthy" topics such as exercising, healthy foods and junk foods, relaxing, or what makes each of us a unique individual.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you describe a classroom routine you and your colleagues usually do without the children's help. It might be something you do before arrival or after most of the children have been picked up. Then you plan and implement a strategy for including children in completing the routine so they can learn about healthy habits. Read the example that follows, then begin the activity.

Including Children in Routines

(Example)

Date: *March 24* **Routine:** *Preparing for Breakfast*

How do you carry out this routine now?

Before the children arrive, we wash and set the tables. Then, one of us goes to the kitchen to pick up our food trolley. Once the trolley is in the classroom we transfer the food to bowls and platters and pour the children's drinks. After all the children have arrived, we eat breakfast.

How will you change this routine to include the children?

We could add two jobs to our helper chart: helping to wash the tables at the end of the day so they'd be ready for the morning; and setting the tables for breakfast.

One of us could get the food trolley as we do now. Then, when all children have arrived, the "helpers" could set the table and assist with transferring the food to platters and bowls.

We could serve the juice in child-sized pitchers so children can pour their own drinks.

What happened when you implemented your plan for this routine?

The helpers all did their jobs eagerly. They were used to these tasks because they already do them for lunch.

Some of the children complained because they had to wait for breakfast.

Some of the children spilled their juice while trying to pour it into the cups.

What additional changes would you like to make to this routine?

Instead of transferring all of the food to bowls and platters, we will put out some as "finger food." This will accommodate the children who are very hungry.

We will provide more help to children who are learning to pour. Also, we will add some small pitchers to the water play props so children can practice pouring while they play.

Including Children in Routines

Date: ____________ **Routine:** ____

How do you carry out this routine now?

How will you change this routine to include the children?

What happened when you implemented your plan for this routine?

What additional changes would you like to make to this routine?

Discuss this activity with your colleagues and your trainer. If appropriate, make the changes in this routine permanent. Continue adapting your routines to include children as active participants and learners.

V. Recognizing the Signs of Possible Child Abuse and Neglect

In this activity you will learn to:

- Identify the four types of child abuse and neglect
- Recognize the signs of possible child abuse and neglect

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

It is very likely that at some point in your career, you will care for a child who is abused or neglected. Children may be maltreated by relatives or nonrelatives, by people they know or by strangers, by males or females. Adults who abuse children come from every income level, race, and ethnic group. They can be of any age. The abuser may harm a child once, or repeatedly.

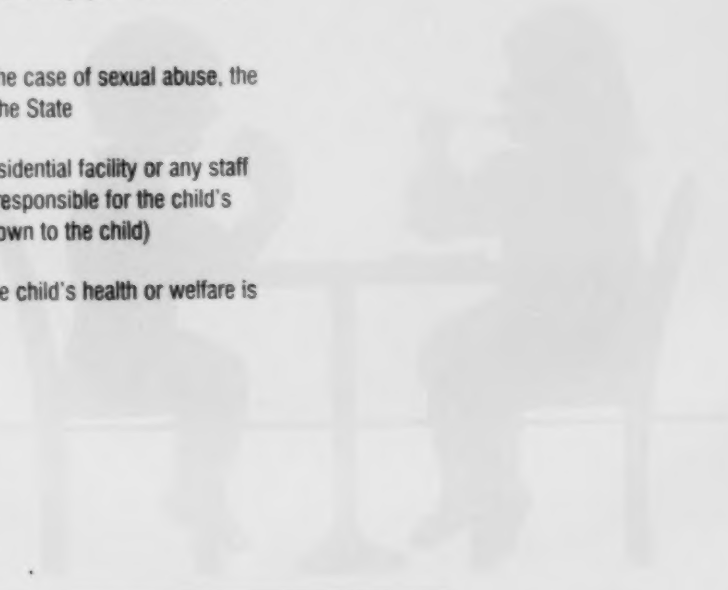
Teachers can play an important role in preventing or stopping child maltreatment. Because they care for children daily, they may identify the signs of possible maltreatment that otherwise go unnoticed. Because they are professionals, they report their observations of the signs of possible abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. This learning activity addresses the first part of a teacher's role—recognizing child maltreatment. Learning Activity VI addresses the second part, reporting requirements.

Public Law 100-294 (reauthorized as the Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Adoption and Family Service Act of 1992, Public Law 102-295) defines child abuse and neglect as:

Child abuse and neglect is defined in Public Law 100-294.

physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment

- of a child under the age of 18, or except in the case of sexual abuse, the age specified by the child protection law of the State
- by a person (including any employee of a residential facility or any staff person providing out-of-home care) who is responsible for the child's welfare (or any other person known or unknown to the child)
- under circumstances which indicated that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened thereby . . . .



Each state and many communities also have specific definitions of child maltreatment. Most definitions cover the following types of abuse:

- **physical abuse,** which includes burning, kicking, biting, punching, or hitting a child;
- **sexual abuse,** which includes using a child in any sexual context which includes fondling, rape, sodomy, and using a child in pornographic pictures or films;
- **emotional abuse or maltreatment**, which includes blaming, belittling, ridiculing, badgering, and constantly ignoring a child's needs;
- **neglect** which includes failing to provide a child with food, clothing, medical attention, or supervision.

Child abuse and neglect can result from **acts** (doing something to injure a child) or **omissions** (not doing or taking actions necessary to protect a child) on the part of a responsible person. Children who are being abused or neglected may exhibit physical and/or behavioral signs of their maltreatment. No single sign or clue proves abuse or neglect, but repeated signs or several signs together indicate the **possibility** that a child is being abused or neglected.

Signs of Physical Abuse

Physical signs, whether mild or severe, are those you can actually see, such as skin or bone injuries. Behavioral clues may exist alone or may accompany physical indicators. They range from subtle changes in a child's behavior to graphic statements by children describing their abuse. Clues to abuse may be found in they way a child looks and acts, what a parent or other responsible adult says or how he or she relates to the child, and how the adult and child behave when they are together.

Observe how a child looks and acts.

Physical abuse of children includes any nonaccidental physical injury caused by the responsible adult in single or repeated episodes. Sometimes, physical abuse is intentional, such as when an adult burns, bites, pokes, cuts, twists limbs, or otherwise harms a child. An injury might be the result of overdiscipline or inappropriate physical punishment, such as occurs when an angry or frustrated adult strikes, shakes, or throws a child. Although the injury is not exactly accidental, the adult may not have intended to hurt the child

Active preschoolers sometimes fall down and bump into things. These accidents may result in injuries to their elbows, chins, noses, foreheads, and other bony areas. Bruises and marks on the soft tissue of the face, back, neck, buttocks, upper arms, thighs, ankles, backs of legs, or genitals, however, are more likely to be caused by physical abuse. Another sign to look for is bruises that are at various stages of healing, as if they are the result of more than one incident.

Injuries to the abdomen or head, which are particularly vulnerable spots, often go undetected until there are internal injuries. Injuries to the abdomen can cause swelling, tenderness, and vomiting. Injuries to the head may cause swelling, dizziness, blackouts, retinal detachment, and even death.

When a child changes a soiled shirt, or rolls up his sleeves on a hot day, you might see bruises or burns that were covered by the clothing. Sometimes abusive parents dress their children in long sleeves or long pants to conceal the signs of abuse.

In addition to physical signs, a child **might** also exhibit behavioral signs of physical abuse. Children's remarks often provide clues. Therefore, it's important to listen carefully to what children say as well as what they do.

- When a teacher notices another big bruise on his leg, Troy tells her, "I fell down the stairs again."
- On most days, Daniel's mother picks him up. He finishes what he's doing, then gathers his belongings. Yesterday, Daniel saw his father at the door and said, "Uh oh, I'm not ready. My dad doesn't like to wait." Today, when a teacher asked about his painting, Daniel said, "This is a bad boy. He got a whipping because he acted like a baby."

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse includes a wide range of behavior: fondling a child's genitals, intercourse, rape, sodomy, exhibitionism, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or pornography. These behaviors are contacts or interactions in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or older child.

Sexual abuse may be committed by a person under the age of 18 when that person is either significantly older than the victim or is in a position of power or control over the child. For example, if a 14-year-old babysitter forces a four-year-old child to look at his or her genitals, this would be considered exploitation, a form of sexual abuse. Although only 14 years old, this offender would be considered in a position of power over the child, and therefore his or her actions could be defined as sexual abuse.

The physical signs of sexual abuse include some that a teacher would notice while caring for young children. For example, while helping a child use the bathroom you might notice torn, stained, or bloody underclothing, or bruises or bleeding on the child's external genitalia, vaginal, or anal areas. If a child says that it hurts to walk or sit, or if he or she complains of pain or itching in the genital area, you should take note and watch to see if this is a recurring condition.

Children who have been sexually abused may also exhibit behavioral signs. They might act out their abuse using dolls or talk with other children about sexual acts. Their premature sexual knowledge is a sign that they have been exposed to sexual activity. They might show excessive curiosity about sexual activities or touch adults on the breast or genitals. Some children who have been sexually abused are very afraid of specific places, such as the bathroom or a bed. Older children who have been sexually abused may be very uncomfortable in situations where they have to undress. For example, such a child might refuse to put on a swimsuit so she could run through the sprinkler.

Some examples of signs that **might** indicate a child is being sexually maltreated include the following:

- The children and teachers are outside on the playground. Simone needs to go inside to the bathroom. Ms. Fox says, "I'll take her." The other teacher, Ms. Young, says, "But it's my turn." Ms. Fox insists that she will take the child. Simone says, "I don't have to go any more." Ten minutes later Simone comes up to Ms. Young and says, "I want you to take me. You don't hurt me."

- The children are sitting at the table eating breakfast. Nancy is wiggling around in her seat a lot. A teacher asks her if she needs to go to the bathroom. Nancy says, "No, it's not that." My bottom hurts where Gary poked me." Gary is her 12-year-old brother.

Signs of Emotional Abuse

Emotional maltreatment includes blaming, belittling, or rejecting a child; constantly treating siblings unequally; or exhibiting a persistent lack of concern for the child's welfare. This type of maltreatment is the most difficult to identify, as the signs are rarely physical. The effects of mental injury, such as lags in physical development or speech disorders, are not as obvious as bruises and lacerations. Some effects might not show up for many years. Also, the behaviors of emotionally maltreated and emotionally disturbed children are often similar.

Although emotional maltreatment does occur alone, it often accompanies physical and sexual abuse. Emotionally maltreated children are not always physically abused, but physically abused children are almost always emotionally maltreated.

The following are examples of signs that might indicate a child is being emotionally maltreated:

- Each time he picks up Nathan, Mr. Wheeler makes fun of his son's efforts. Typical comments include: "Can't you button that coat right? You never get the buttons lined up with the holes. You look like an idiot." "What's that a picture of? It looks like a five-legged horse." "Can't you climb to the top of the climber yet? All the other kids climbed to the top. What's the matter with you, are your legs too short?" Mr. Wheeler told a teacher, "I like to give Nathan a hard time. I don't want him to think he's better than anyone else. He needs to remember that he's got a lot to learn."

- The Jackson family has two children enrolled in the program. Five-year-old Neesie is an outgoing leader who excels at everything. Three-year-old Tiffany is a quiet child who plays alone or with one or two friends. Most days, when Mrs. Jackson picks up the girls she ignores Tiffany and lavishes praise and attention on Neesie. Today she says, "Neesie, let me see what you made today? Where's Tiffany? Sitting in the corner again?" Mrs. Jackson tells a teacher, "I know Neesie will do well in life—she's so smart. And Tiffany—I don't know what will happen to her!"

Signs of Neglect

Child neglect is characterized by a failure to provide for a child's basic needs. Neglect can be physical (for example, refusal to seek health care when a child clearly needs medical attention), educational (for example, failure to enroll a child of mandatory school age), or emotional (for example, chronic or extreme spouse abuse in the child's presence). Child neglect, like child abuse, may result in death. Neglectful families often appear to have many problems they are not able to handle.

When considering the possibility of neglect, it is important to look for consistencies. Do the signs of neglect occur rarely or frequently? Are they chronic (present almost every day), periodic (happening after weekends, vacations, or absences), or episodic (for example, seen twice during a period when the child's mother was in the hospital)?

Some examples of signs that **might** indicate a child is being neglected include the following:

- Sara falls down outside and badly scrapes her knee. A teacher cleans the knee with soap, puts on a bandage, and prepares an accident report for Sara's parents. Four days later, Sara complains her knee hurts. The teacher looks at her knee and notices the bandage has not been changed and the wound is becoming infected.
- Andrea tells a teacher she is tired today because her baby brother Max woke her up in the night. She says, "My mommy wasn't home yet, so I made Max a bottle and gave it to him. Then he finally went back to sleep."

Picking Up Clues from Families

Early childhood programs are family oriented, encouraging a great deal of formal and informal communication between teachers and parents. During daily drop-off and pick-up times and at scheduled conferences, parents provide details of family life, discuss discipline methods, or ask for help with problems. Some children enjoy talking about their families, so they too may provide information about the family's interactions and home life.

Conversations with parents can provide clues to how the parent feels about the child. Be alert to the possible signs of child abuse and neglect if the parent constantly:

- blames or belittles the child ("I told you not to drop that. Why weren't you paying attention?")
- sees the child as very different from his or her siblings ("His older sister Terry never caused me these problems. She always did exactly what she was told to do.")
- sees the child as "bad," "evil," or a "monster" ("He really seems to be out to get me. He's just like his father, and he was really an evil man.")
- finds nothing good or attractive in the child ("Oh well, some kids are just a pain in the neck. You can see this one doesn't have much going for her.")
- seems unconcerned about the child ("She was probably just having a bad day. I really don't have time to talk today.")
- fails to keep appointments or refuses to discuss problems the child is having in the program ("That's what I pay you for—it's your job to make her behave.")
- misuses alcohol or other drugs.

Isolation and extreme stress can lead to child abuse or neglect.

When you know a family well, you are in a better position to gauge whether a problem may be a chronic condition or a temporary situation; a typical childhood problem that the program can readily handle or a problem that requires outside intervention. Family circumstances may also provide clues regarding the possible presence of abuse or neglect. The risk of abuse or neglect increases when families are isolated from friends, neighbors, and other family members, or if there is no apparent "lifeline" to which a family can turn in times of crisis. Marital, economic, emotional, or social crises are among the causes of family stress that can lead to child abuse or neglect.

Abuse and Neglect in a Program

You may find it hard to imagine that child abuse and neglect could take place at an early childhood program, but it does happen. Thinking of this possibility may make you feel as though you are "snitching" on your colleagues or that your supervisors will be "spying" on teachers. It may help to remember that your primary responsibility is to keep children safe and healthy. One important way to do this is to be alert to the possibility of child abuse and neglect taking place right at the program site.

Much of the information provided already applies to both familial and institutional child abuse and neglect. There are, however, some specific signs that may indicate child abuse or neglect in a child care setting. Here are some examples:

- A child refuses to participate in activities supervised by a particular teacher.
- A child shows extreme fear of a teacher.
- A teacher notices that a colleague frequently spends time out of sight with one child.
- A teacher takes unscheduled breaks without telling his or her colleagues.
- A teacher says a child is "bad," "spoiled," or "needs to be taught some respect."
- A child states that he or she has been hurt by a teacher.
- A teacher shows favoritism to one child and gives that child special attention and treats.
- A teacher holds a child often, although the child seems tense and tries to get away.

If you see any of these signs, or others that cause you to suspect the possibility of child abuse or neglect, discuss your observations with your supervisor.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you answer several questions about defining and recognizing child abuse and neglect. If you can't answer a question, review the information provided in this learning activity, then try again. An answer sheet is provided at the end of the module.

Defining and Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

1. **A parent refuses to get medical care for a child who will die without treatment. Is this considered abuse or neglect?**

2. **What are the four types of child abuse and neglect?**

3. **What are "acts and omissions?" Give an example of child abuse or neglect that is the result of an act and an example that is the result of an omission.**

4. **Does sexual maltreatment always include physical contact between an offender and child? Explain your answer.**

5. **Why is it difficult to identify emotional maltreatment?**

6. **Why are teachers in an excellent position to identify signs of possible child abuse and neglect?**

Review the answer sheet at the end of this module. Discuss this learning activity with your trainer.

VI. Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect

In this activity you will learn to:

- Follow state and local requirements for reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect
- Overcome emotional and other barriers to reporting

Teachers must follow established reporting requirements.

If you suspect or have reason to believe a child may have been abused or neglected, you are ethically and legally required to report that information so action can be taken to help the child and the family. In most states, early childhood teachers are, by law, required to report suspected child abuse and neglect. In addition, you have a professional responsibility to know and understand the reporting requirements of your state and local government, and your program. You must also follow established procedures for filing a report.

State laws specify where to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Each state law specifies one (or more) agencies to receive reports of suspected child abuse and neglect. Usually reports are made to the Department of Social Services, the Department of Human Resources, the Division of Family and Children's Services, or Child Protective Services of the local city, county, or state government. In some states the police department may also receive reports of child maltreatment. It is important to know who receives reports of suspected child abuse and neglect in your jurisdiction. State reporting statute includes this information.

Some states require that either a written or an oral report be made to the responsible agency. In other states an oral report is required immediately, and a written report must follow in 24 to 48 hours. You will need to check your state law for the specific requirements.

Most states require reporters to provide the following information:

- the child's name, age, and address;
- the child's present location (for example, at the program);
- the parent's name and address;
- the nature and extent of the injury or condition observed; and
- the reporter's name and location (sometimes not required but very useful for the agency conducting the investigation).

Most programs have established policies defining the duties and responsibilities of all staff in reporting child abuse and neglect. If you don't have a copy of your program's child abuse and neglect reporting procedures, ask your director for one. Use it to complete the following chart.

State and Local Policy on Child Abuse and Neglect

I report suspected child abuse and neglect to:

The phone number is:

I must give the following information:

I also must follow these state and local reporting requirements:

My report must be: **Oral** ☐ **Written** ☐ **Both** ☐

Make a copy of this keep it where you can easily find it.

Overcoming Barriers to Reporting

When you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you may feel very reluctant to report your suspicions. It helps to remember that a report of child maltreatment is not an accusation; rather, it is a request to begin the helping process. But the reporting process does not always go smoothly. You may encounter difficulties that will discourage you from making future reports. If you are aware of these difficulties beforehand and plan ways to overcome them, you will be better able to fulfill your legal and ethical responsibilities.

You do not have to prove your suspicions.

Some teachers have personal feelings that are a barrier to reporting child abuse or neglect. They simply prefer not to get involved. They are afraid they have made a mistake and convince themselves that there is a perfectly good explanation for the child's injuries or behavior. They may fear other teachers or parents will think them incompetent or an alarmist. Teachers should realize that while they wait for positive proof of abuse or neglect, the child is vulnerable to continued maltreatment.

Your primary responsibility is to protect children.

Another potential barrier to reporting is the special relationship between parents and a teacher (or two teachers). At times, when teachers observe signs of abuse or neglect, they may give parents or colleagues the benefit of the doubt. Even when they do suspect child maltreatment, they may fear that confronting the parent or colleague will result in a hostile, indignant, or distressed reaction or retaliation. It may help to remember that as a professional, your primary responsibilities are to protect children and to support their families. By reporting your suspicions to the appropriate authorities, you are protecting children. In addition, you are helping the whole family (or your colleague) get needed assistance.

Getting Ready to Report

Once you suspect a child is being maltreated, you must waste no time in reporting. Taking this action will probably make you feel at risk, confused, and generally uncomfortable. It is not a pleasant task. To alleviate some of your discomfort, you can use the following checklist to prepare for the report. (Note: some items may not be applicable to your situation.)

Reporting Checklist

Done

1. Document your suspicions and review your observation notes and anecdotal records. ☐
2. Analyze your information to identify the things that cause you to suspect abuse or neglect. Make a list of the physical and behavioral signs you have observed. ☐
3. Describe the parent (or teacher) and child interactions you observed. Note instances when the adult indicated he or she finds the child difficult, worthless, or impossible to handle. Include examples of the adult's lack of interest in the child. ☐
4. Discuss with your colleagues the physical and behavioral signs you have documented. If they have reason to suspect abuse or neglect, discuss their reasons. ☐
5. Ask your supervisor what support he or she will provide once you file the report and what the program will do if the parent tries to remove the child. ☐
6. Set up a support system for yourself. After making the report, you may feel vulnerable and need to talk with others about your feelings and concerns, without breaching confidentiality. ☐
7. Review the program's reporting policy. ☐
8. Collect the information needed to file the initial report. ☐
9. Obtain the exact telephone number and address of the agency to which you should report. ☐
10. Obtain a reporting form, if required, or use a piece of paper. ☐
11. File your report. ☐
12. Notify the parents (or colleague) that you have filed a report. ☐

This checklist can help you organize your thoughts and secure the support you will need once the report is filed. You might not be able to wait until you have completed all the items on this checklist. In some cases, you may have to report your suspicions immediately.

Offer support to the child and family.

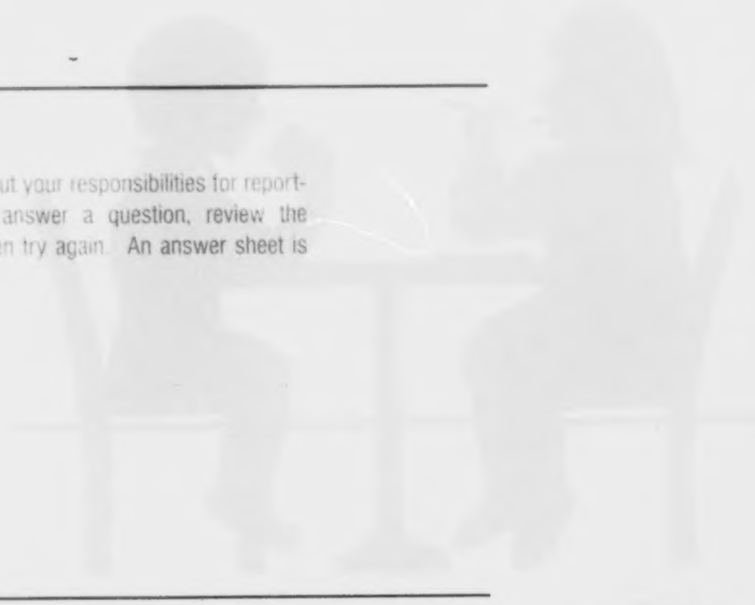
Note that the last step on this checklist is to notify the child's parents (or your colleague) that you have filed a report. In most cases this will be a difficult conversation. You want to be supportive, while carrying out your primary responsibility—to keep the child safe and healthy. Try to maintain a professional tone. Describe **what** you reported ("repeated incidences of cigarette burns on Carl's arm"), **when** the report was filed ("this morning"), and **to whom** ("Child Protective Services"). Explain that you have carried out your legal, professional, and ethical responsibilities to file a report and are not involved in "proving" that abuse or neglect took place. In addition, express your willingness to support the family as they deal with this difficult situation. They may not respond to your offer immediately. However, it is important to let them know that you are not judging anyone's behavior. Instead, you have reported signs of possible abuse so their child and the family can get the help they need.

After Filing the Report

In some states and local jurisdictions, authorities are so overwhelmed by reports of child abuse and neglect that staff cannot respond to every case. There may be internal policies that require the agency to respond first to cases that are life-threatening or extremely clear-cut. You may see no response to a report you have filed. If this happens, remember it is extremely important to continue supporting the child and family and advocating for them to receive needed services. In addition, you should continue to be alert to physical and behavioral signs of abuse or neglect. If necessary, file a second, or even third report. Some states have hotline numbers set up for filing reports. Find out if there is one in your state, and use it if necessary.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you answer several questions about your responsibilities for reporting child abuse and neglect. If you can't answer a question, review the information provided in this learning activity, then try again. An answer sheet is provided at the end of the module.



Teacher Responsibilities for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

1. **Why do child maltreatment laws exist?**

2. **How do maltreated children get assistance?**

3. **What happens to children if nobody reports child maltreatment?**

4. **Under what circumstances do I have to file a report?**

5. **What will happen to me if I don't report?**

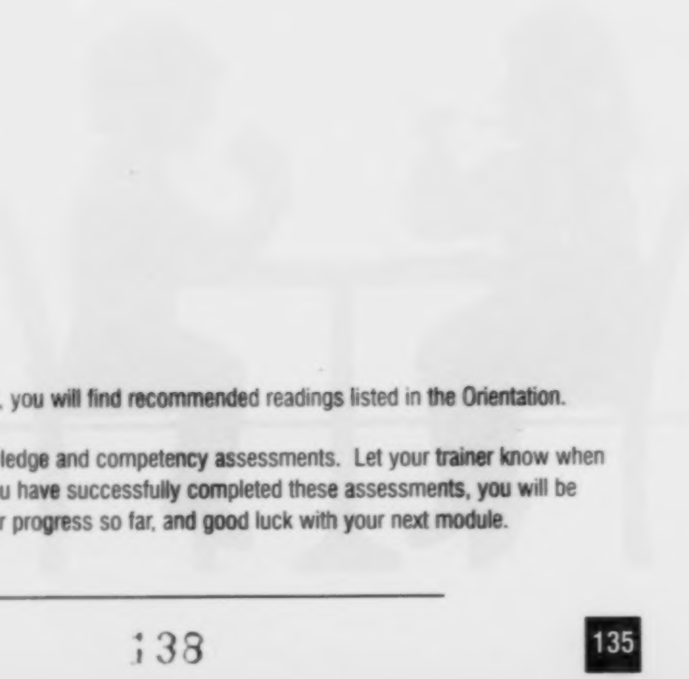
6. **What if I'm wrong and the parents sue me?**

Review the answer sheet at the end of the module and discuss your responses with your trainer

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for keeping children healthy. Before you go on, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module.

Write a summary of what you learned, and list the skills you developed or improved.



If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 81-83)

Maintaining Indoor and Outdoor Environments That Promote Wellness and Reduce the Spread of Disease

1. **What are three things Ms. Williams did to maintain a sanitary environment?**
   a. *She opened several windows.*

   b. *She installed a new roll of paper towels.*

   c. *She conducted health checks as children arrived.*

2. **What did Ms. Williams do to keep germs from spreading?**
   a. *She helped a child blow his nose and discarded the used tissue.*

   b. *She washed her hands and made sure the child washed his.*

Helping Children Develop Habits That Promote Good Hygiene and Nutrition

1. **What did Mr. Lopez do to help the children develop healthy habits?**
   a. *He ate a family-style meal with the children?*

   b. *He modeled good nutrition by eating an apple slice and saying "Apples are good for us."*

   c. *He joined the children at the sink and brushed his teeth.*

   d. *He reminded the children to brush up and down.*

2. **How did the children use their self-help skills to stay healthy?**
   a. *They cleared the dishes and wiped the placements.*

   b. *They washed their hands.*

   c. *They got their own toothbrushes and brushed their teeth.*

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

1. **What are the signs of possible child abuse in this situation?**
   a. *Carolyn has loop-shaped bruises on large areas of her back.*

   b. *Some of the bruises seem old, some new.*

   c. *Carolyn says she was "whipped."*

2. **How did Ms. Lee support Ms. Kim?**
   a. *She discusses the signs of possible abuse with Ms. Kim.*

   b. *She reminds Ms. Kim to maintain confidentiality and says she will be available if Ms. Kim needs to talk about the situation.*

Defining and Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

(p. 128)

1. **A parent refuses to get medical care for a child who will die without treatment. Is this considered child abuse or neglect?**

   Yes. This is failing to provide health care, a form of neglect.

2. **What are the four types of child abuse and neglect?**

   Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or maltreatment, and neglect.

3. **What are "acts and omissions?" Give an example of child abuse or neglect that is the result of an act and an example that is the result of an omission.**

   An act refers to what a parent or other caretaker does that is child abuse or neglect; for example, burning a child's arm. An omission refers to what the person does not do; for example, failing to provide appropriate supervision.

4. **Does sexual maltreatment always include physical contact between an offender and child? Explain your answer.**

   No. The definition of sexual maltreatment includes exploitation, which might include forcing a child to look at pornography or the offender's genitals, or could include photographing a child for use in pornographic publications.

5. **Why is it difficult to identify emotional maltreatment?**

   The signs are rarely physical and some effects do not show up for years. Also, the behaviors of emotionally maltreated and emotionally disturbed children are often similar.

6. **Why are teachers in an excellent position to identify signs of possible child abuse and neglect?**

   Teachers see children almost every day. They might detect signs of possible child maltreatment that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Teacher Responsibilities for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

(p. 134)

1. **Why do child maltreatment laws exist?**

   To provide protection for children and to help families.

2. **How do maltreated children get assistance?**

   When possible maltreatment is identified and reported, an investigation by an agency will begin.

3. **What happens to children if nobody reports maltreatment?**

   If the maltreatment goes unnoticed and unreported, it is likely it will continue and perhaps escalate.

4. **Under what circumstances do I have to file a report?**

   If your knowledge of the child and his or her family and your professional training and experience lead you to suspect child maltreatment, then you must file a report.

5. **What will happen to me if I don't report?**

   If you fail to report, under your state's laws you might be subject to fines or even a jail sentence.

6. **What if I'm wrong and the parents sue me?**

   When you make a report in good faith, the law protects you. You cannot be sued for reporting child maltreatment because as a early childhood educator, you are mandated to do so.

Glossary

Body fluids

Liquids and semi-liquids eliminated by or present in the body, such as feces, urine, mucus, and saliva.

Diet

The kind and amount of food and drink regularly consumed.

Disinfectant

A cleaning solution that destroys the causes of infection.

Hygiene

Practices that preserve good health and eliminate disease-producing germs.

Infection

Invasion of the body by tiny organisms that cause disease.

Nutrient

A component of food that offers nourishment to the body.

Nutritious

Having large amounts of vitamins, minerals, complex carbohydrates, or protein, and being low in fats, salt, and sugar.

Sodium

A mineral normally found in seafood, poultry, and some vegetables; one of the components of table salt.

Starch

A carbohydrate food such as cereal, potatoes, pasta, and bread.

Module 3: *Learning Environment*

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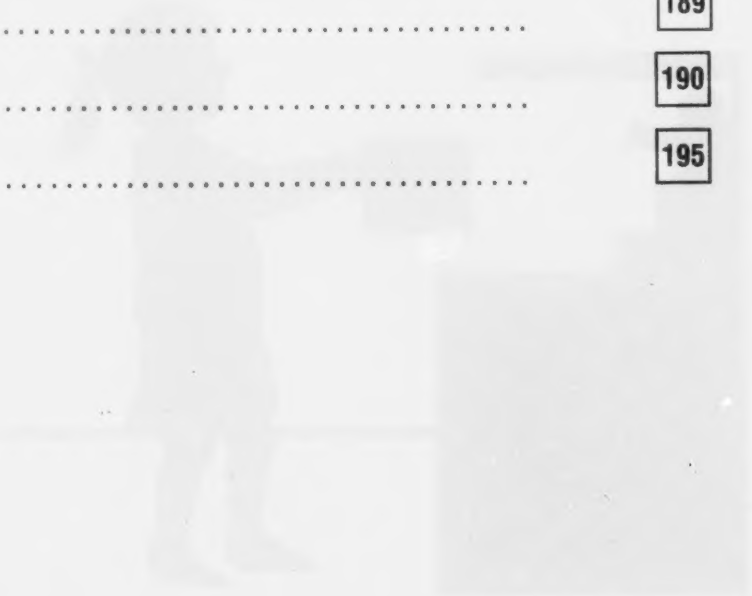


Overview

Establishing and maintaining a learning environment involves:

- Organizing indoor and outdoor areas that encourage play and exploration
- Selecting and attractively displaying materials and equipment
- Planning and implementing a schedule, routines, and transitions that meet children's needs

The learning environment is the physical space used by the children. It includes both the outdoor and indoor play spaces. The schedule and routines you follow each day are also part of a learning environment in which children can feel comfortable and competent.

You and the children will spend a considerable portion of the day together. If the physical environment is attractive and well-designed, you will find that children are more purposefully engaged in activities. As a result, you may discover that you enjoy your work with children much more. The quality of the learning environment affects how children and adults feel and act.

The quality of the physical environment affects how children and adults feel.

Features such as the size of the room, the colors of the walls, the type of flooring, the amount of light, and the number of windows all influence the quality of the indoor environment. While you may have limited control over many of these features, you have a great deal to say about how to organize furniture and materials and how to display children's work.

A well-organized classroom can support your goals for children and allow you more time to observe and interact with them in positive ways. You can arrange the furniture to define a variety of interest areas where children can play cooperatively in small groups. The selection of materials and how you display them convey powerful messages to children, encouraging them to choose activities on their own and to take care of materials.

Indoor and outdoor spaces should be well defined and offer a variety of choices.

The outdoors offers children a whole new range of experiences and textures. A good outdoor environment has soft and hard surfaces, shady and sunny areas, and protected and safe places for children to run and play. In a well-designed outdoor space children can run, jump, skip, throw and catch a ball, and use their "outside voices." These experiences provide a healthy release as children stretch their muscles, breathe in fresh air, take in the sunshine, and enjoy the freedom possible outdoors.

The daily schedule, routines, and transitions are part of the learning environment.

Your program's schedule, routines, and transitions also contribute to creating a comfortable atmosphere. When children know what to expect each day, it helps them feel secure. Each day will go more smoothly if the schedule, routines, and transitions are designed to meet children's needs.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in establishing and maintaining a learning environment. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Organizing Indoor and Outdoor Areas That Encourage Play and Exploration

Establish a variety of well-defined and equipped indoor and outdoor interest areas that reflect children's current skills and interests.

Create soft, cozy areas where children can play alone, look at books, listen to music, or talk with a friend.

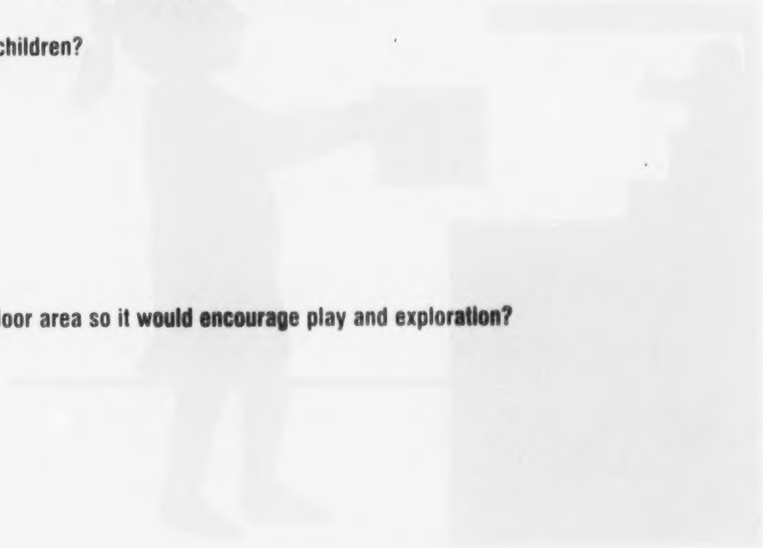
Define separate spaces indoors and outdoors for active and quiet play.

Adapt the environment, if necessary, to fully include children with special needs.

Provide sufficient storage for children's personal belongings, such as labeled cubbies or bins.

Arrange the outdoor area to support a variety of activities, such as climbing, swinging, building, running, and relaxing.

Mr. Lopez looks around the play yard. He sees several children acting frustrated. Sarah is in the shed pulling on a tire that is under a tangle of boards, riding toys, and rakes. Benjamin struggles to pull a tricycle out of the shed. Andy drops the watering can when a child chasing a ball races by the tomato plants he is watering. "This place needs some organizing," Mr. Lopez decides. Over the next week, he makes changes to encourage children's play and exploration. First, he arranges the tires and boards so that children can get them easily. He hangs the gardening tools within easy reach on the door of the storage shed. He moves the trikes to the path and the balls to the grass away from the garden. He tells the children about the different areas and reminds them where to ride their trikes and throw balls.



1. **What did Mr. Lopez know about the children?**

2. **How did Mr. Lopez organize the outdoor area so it would encourage play and exploration?**

Selecting and Attractively Displaying Materials and Equipment

Provide a variety of materials to encourage dramatic play, construction, small muscle development, and thinking skills.

Display learning materials related to current activities (for example, new materials might include firefighter hats, fire engines, and books on firefighters).

Use low open shelves and picture labels so children can easily select materials and return them independently.

Include dolls, picture books, photographs, and toys that positively portray different ethnic groups and people with disabilities.

Store materials and supplies that are used together in the same place.

Convey positive messages through the environment (e.g., this is a safe place; you belong here; you can find what you need).

It's rest time and Ms. Williams is using the time to make a list of the materials she wants to offer children the next day. During the morning, the children made get-well cards to send to a child who is in the hospital. There was a lot of interest in doctors and hospitals, so Ms. Williams brought out two story books about going to the hospital. She is now preparing a hospital prop box to add to the house corner. In it she puts two white lab coats, a stethoscope, ace bandages, and a pad and pencil. Next, she thinks about the fact that several children have seemed particularly anxious during the past few days. She decides to open the water table because she knows water play is a calming activity. She makes a note to add blue coloring to the water and to set out plastic squeeze bottles, eye droppers, measuring cups, and plastic tubes for the water table.

1. **What did Ms. Williams know about the children?**

2. **What activities and materials did Ms. Williams plan to offer for the children and why?**

Planning and Implementing a Schedule, Routines, and Transitions to Meet Children's Needs

Plan a schedule that includes large blocks of time when children choose what they want to do.

Offer a balance of activity choices including active and quiet; indoors and outdoors; and individual, small group, and large group activities.

Plan at least two periods a day for children to play outdoors.

Allow time for children to use their self-help skills in daily routines such as hand washing and dressing to go outside.

Use daily routines to teach new skills and concepts such as classification and sequencing.

Plan something for children to do during transitions between activities so they won't be restless.

It is clean-up time in the three-year-old room. Ms. Richards is helping a small group in the block area to clean up. It seems as if every block is out. "We have a big job in the block corner today," she says. "Let's start by finding all the blocks that look like this one. See how many triangles you can find." When all the triangle blocks are on the shelf, Ms. Richards says, "Jamie, what shape should we clean up next?" Jamie holds up a cylinder. "OK," says Ms. Richards, "let's find all the cylinders next." Ms. Kim realizes that the other children are going to be finished cleaning up before the block builders. She goes around to each interest area and tells the children to go to the meeting area when they are finished cleaning up and select a book to look at. "I'll be there to read our story in just a few minutes," she says. When the block builders finish their clean up, Ms. Kim is ready to read the story.

1. **How did Ms. Richards use block clean up as an opportunity for learning?**

2. **What did Ms. Kim do to make sure that the children who were finished cleaning up had something to do?**

How Your Environment Affects You

We are not always aware of how our environment is affecting us.

We are all affected by our environment. Whether sitting in the living room, shopping in a store, climbing a mountain, or sitting in a staff lounge, we react to the environment. Our surroundings affect our feelings, comfort levels, behavior, and ability to accomplish tasks. Consider how you behave in the following situations:

- Standing in a hot, crowded bus or subway when you are sandwiched in among strangers. (Perhaps you pull your shoulders in, try to avoid any contact with others, and count the minutes until you get off.)
- Eating in a special restaurant with a favorite friend. The lights are low, and the noise level is muffled. The smells are delicious, and attractive pictures hang on the walls. (You are probably relaxed, enjoying the conversation, and savoring each bite.)
- Preparing a meal in a strange kitchen when the owner is not there to help you. (You may be very frustrated, especially if you can't figure out how the kitchen is organized. You spend lots of time looking for the things you need. It's inefficient, and you may not cook as well as you usually do.)

It's easy to see in these examples how our environment can affect our actions and our feelings. But the influence of our surroundings is not always so clear. Sometimes we are not aware of how the environment is making us feel and act. To identify some less obvious factors in the environment that support you or work against you, take time to answer the following questions.

Think about a store where you like to shop. What makes it pleasant to shop in this store?

Now, think about a store you dislike. When you are there, you feel frustrated and angry. What makes it difficult to shop in this store?

Look over your answers to these two questions. Many of the factors you identified that make shopping enjoyable or difficult apply to the classroom environment as well. Your work environment should support you and work for you. If it is well-organized and appropriate for the children you teach, it can make your job easier and more enjoyable.

Next, think of your favorite place to be—indoors or outdoors. Close your eyes for a moment and imagine yourself in that space. How does it feel? Smell? Look? What do you hear? What are you doing? Are you alone, or are other people with you?

Describe your favorite place below.

Often when people describe their favorite place, they identify features such as the following:

- a quiet place to be alone;
- a soft and comfortable place to stretch out;
- a place where music is playing;
- a place where only the sounds of nature can be heard;
- a bright and sunny place where the air smells fresh and clean; or
- a colorful and attractive place.

Keep the features of your favorite place in mind as you consider the learning environment of your classroom and outdoor space. A comfortable environment for young children makes them want to be there. It also makes teaching more satisfying.

When you have finished this overview section, complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions of the terms that are used.

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to establish and maintain an environment for learning. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Organizing Indoor and Outdoor Areas that Encourage Play and Exploration

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Establish a variety of well-defined and equipped indoor and outdoor interest areas that reflect children's current skills and interests.	☐	☐	☐
2. Create soft, cozy areas where children can play alone, look at books, listen to music, or talk with a friend.	☐	☐	☐
3. Define separate spaces indoors and outdoors for active and quiet play.	☐	☐	☐
4. Adapt the environment, if necessary, to fully include children with special needs.	☐	☐	☐
5. Provide sufficient storage for children's personal belongings, such as labeled cubbies or bins.	☐	☐	☐
6. Arrange the outdoor area to support a variety of activities, such as climbing, swinging, building, running, and relaxing.	☐	☐	☐

Selecting and Attractively Displaying Materials and Equipment

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
7. Provide a variety of materials to encourage dramatic play, construction, small muscle development, and thinking skills.	☐	☐	☐
8. Display learning materials related to current activities (for example, firefighter hats, fire engines, and books on firefighters after a trip to the fire department).	☐	☐	☐
9. Use low, open shelves and picture labels so children can easily select materials and return them independently.	☐	☐	☐
10. Include dolls, picture books, photographs, and toys that positively portray different ethnic groups and people with disabilities.	☐	☐	☐
11. Store materials and supplies that are used together in the same place.	☐	☐	☐
12. Convey positive messages through the environment (e.g., this is a safe place; you belong here; you can find what you need.)	☐	☐	☐

Planning and Implementing a Schedule, Routines, and Transitions to Meet Children's Needs

13. Plan a schedule that includes large blocks of time when children choose what they want to do.	☐	☐	☐
14. Offer a balance of activity choices including active and quiet, indoors and outdoors, and individual, small group, and large group activities.	☐	☐	☐
15. Plan at least two periods a day for children to play outdoors.	☐	☐	☐

Planning and Implementing a Schedule, Routines, and Transitions to Meet Children's Needs

(continued)

	I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
16.	Allow time for children to use their self-help skills in daily routines such as hand washing and dressing to go outside.	☐	☐	☐
17.	Use daily routines to teach new skills and concepts such as classification and sequencing.	☐	☐	☐
18.	Plan something for children to do during transitions between activities so they won't be restless.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you will list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 3, Learning Environment.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical behaviors of preschool children
- Use what you know about child development to create a good environment for learning

Erik Erikson describes the preschool years as the stage of Initiative. This means that children are full of ideas about what to do and how to do it. They like having a variety of choices that respond to their varied interests. The more preschool children are encouraged to come up with ideas and try them out, the more confident they become in their own abilities.

Preschool children are active learners.

A good learning environment for preschool children invites them to explore, makes it easier for them to work cooperatively with others, and encourages them to take responsibility for maintaining the environment. Preschool children have many skills and interests as well as needs that should be considered in planning the learning environment. They enjoy new challenges and will eagerly explore new, interesting materials you put out for their use.

Preschool children can express their ideas and feelings in many ways. Using crayons, markers, and paints, they learn to represent these ideas in symbols. Playing with blocks or in the house corner, they recreate scenes from their own experiences. In the process they develop a deeper understanding of the world around them.

Preschool children enjoy being with others.

Preschool children are very social. They are learning how to share and to take turns, and they realize the advantages of working together. They learn these skills by having many opportunities to work with one or two other children. A good learning environment is therefore divided into six or more interest areas where small groups of children can work together undisturbed.

You have probably noticed that preschool children have lots of energy. They are continually refining large and small muscle skills, and they want to practice these skills, over and over again. A good learning environment offers children ample opportunities to acquire and practice new skills.

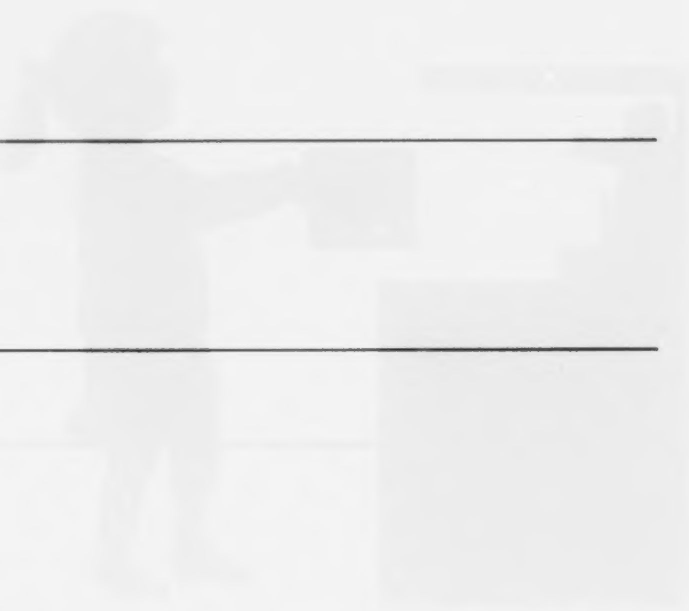
Planning a learning environment for preschool children means creating a setting and providing appropriate materials that enable them to expand their skills and understandings and to grow in all areas of development.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next page identifies some typical behaviors of preschool children. Included are behaviors relevant to creating and using an appropriate learning environment. The right column asks you to identify ways teachers can use this information to create a learning environment. As you work through the module you will learn new strategies and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at one time. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of this module. By the time you complete all the learning activities, you will find that you have learned many ways to create a good learning environment for preschool children.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Create a Learning Environment**
They enjoy large muscle activities such running, jumping, climbing, and riding tricycles.	*Set aside an indoor area for large play equipment. Plan some activities that use large muscles (for example, pounding clay or dough, woodworking). Make sure the outdoor area is safe for running and climbing.*
They are gaining increasing control of small muscles.	
They are learning to share and take turns.	
They can play cooperatively with one or two others and often have "best friends."	
They sometimes need to get away from the group and be by themselves.	
They have a lot of energy but can easily tire.	



Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Create a Learning Environment
They like to be helpful.	
They can take responsibility for keeping the classroom orderly.	
They love to play make-believe. Their dramatic play goes from family roles to people in the community and super-heroes.	
They have lots of interests.	
They draw pictures and create objects that represent real things.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your responses with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add more examples of how teachers create a learning environment for preschool children.

II. Conveying Positive Messages Through the Environment

In this activity you will learn to:

- Identify ways that the learning environment can promote independence, security, and a sense of belonging
- Arrange space and materials to give children positive and clear messages

All environments convey messages. Every room in your home says something different. Your living room may have soft furniture, low tables with magazines, lamps, and a soft carpet. The message is: "Come sit down. Read. Talk. Relax."

Fast-food restaurants are designed to get you in and out quickly. They are set up so you can select and order your food, get it immediately, pay, and be seated in a matter of minutes. The message is: "Hurry up."

Many schools have individual desks lined up facing the front of the room. In some older school buildings the desks are bolted to the floor. The message is: "No talking to other children. Listen to the teacher. The teacher conveys all information."

Your center's indoor and outdoor spaces also convey messages to children. If the environment is attractive, cheerful, orderly, and filled with interesting objects, the message is: "This is a good and interesting place. We care about you. You can have fun here."

The environment conveys powerful messages to children.

If a child entering your room sees a cubby with his picture and name on it, his art work displayed on the wall, and a place for his toothbrush, the message he receives is: "You belong here. We will help you take care of your things. This is your space, too."

A cozy corner of the room filled with large pillows, bright lights, and a shelf full of attractive books says: "Come sit here. Choose a book you like. Enjoy yourself."

Outdoors, hollow blocks and planks in a open space convey the message: "You can create your own structures and play in them."

What messages do you want children to receive when they come into your room? Listed on the following pages are positive messages and suggestions of how the environment can convey these messages to children.

"This is a cheerful and happy place."

- Walls are painted neutral colors (light gray, off-white, beige), and bright colors are used selectively (on shelves or containers).
- The outdoor space includes soft areas (e.g., grass or mats) where children can stretch out and relax.
- Furniture is clean and well-maintained. (Wood or plastic furniture is preferable to metal furniture.)
- Children's work is attractively displayed where they can easily see it.
- The room includes other decorative touches, including plants, displays of collections (such as shells, leaves, and stones), pretty fabrics to cover pillows or to use as tablecloths, and a well-lit fish tank.
- Areas of the room contain soft places for children (carpets, large pillows), soft materials (water, playdough), and soft pets (guinea pigs, rabbits).

"You belong here, and we like you."

- There is a cubby for each child, labeled with the child's name or picture.
- There is a place to keep a special blanket and a stuffed animal for nap time.
- There is a labeled place for each child's toothbrush.
- Each child's art work is displayed and protected.
- Pictures on the walls, in books, and in learning materials show people of different ethnic backgrounds.
- There are toys and materials that will interest specific children.
- There is child-sized furniture.

"This is a place you can trust."

- Equipment and materials are arranged consistently so children know where to find the things they need.
- Shelves are neat and uncluttered so children can make choices.
- A well-defined schedule is illustrated so children know what to expect.
- Routines follow a consistent order.

"You can do many things on your own and be independent."

- Storage shelves are low so children can reach materials. Toys with small parts are kept in boxes, plastic dish pans, or baskets.
- Materials are located in the areas where they will be used (crayons and markers near paper; blocks and block props in the block area).
- Picture labels on the shelves tell children where each toy or object belongs.
- A job chart shows how each child helps keep the room neat.
- Open spaces outdoors encourage children to run.

"You can get away and be by yourself when you need to."

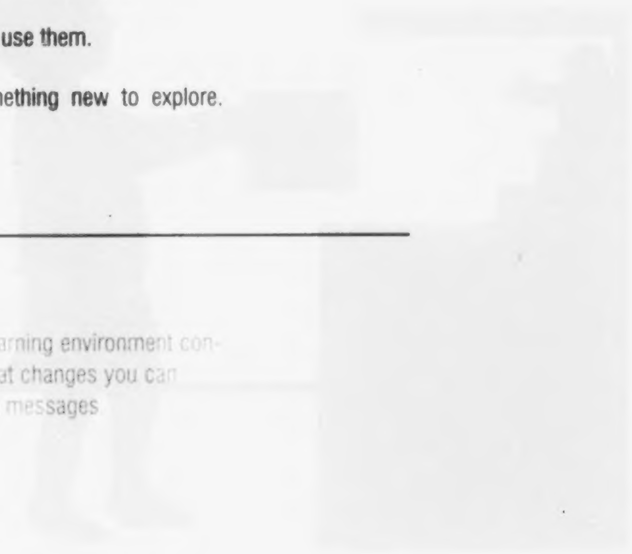
- There are enclosed, quiet areas that accommodate one to two children.
- Outdoor materials and equipment allow children to play on different levels and create enclosed places.
- There is a large pillow or a stuffed chair off in a corner.
- There are headphones for a phonograph or tape recorder.

"This is a safe place to explore and try out your ideas."

- There are protected and defined quiet areas for small group activities.
- There is protected floor space to build with blocks without fear of traffic.
- The yard is fenced and soft cushioning is under climbing equipment.
- Attractive displays of materials invite children to use them.
- Toys are rotated so each week there is something new to explore.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you identify ways in which your learning environment conveys positive messages to children. Then you decide what changes you can make in your indoor and outdoor space to reinforce these messages.



Message	How the Environment Conveys This Message	New Ideas to Try
"This is a cheerful and happy place."		
"You belong here, and we like you."		
"This is a place you can trust."		

Message	How the Environment Conveys This Message	New Ideas to Try
"You can do many things on your own and be independent."		
"You can get away and be by yourself when you need to."		
"This is a safe place to explore and try out your ideas."		

After you have completed the charts, discuss your ideas with your colleagues. Use the chart below to note what changes you decide to make. Over the next few weeks, write down how children react to the changes you have made in your learning environment.

Changes to the Environment	**Children's Reactions**

Talk with your trainer about the changes you have made and how the children reacted.

III. Establishing Interest Areas in the Classroom

In this activity you will learn to:

- Identify the interest areas that are appropriate for your children
- Locate interest areas so they are accessible and functional

Interest areas are especially appropriate for preschool children.

An early childhood classroom includes a variety of clearly defined interest areas. This is done for two specific reasons. First, young children work best in small groups. It is easier for them to relate positively to only one or two other children than to a large group. By dividing your space into smaller areas, you can limit the number of children who can play together in any one area.

A second reason for creating interest areas in your classrooms is to offer children clear choices. Sometimes children want to work quietly alone or with one other child. An area set aside for books, art activities, or table toys allows several choices for quiet activities. Areas set aside for dramatic play, block building, woodworking, or large muscle activities offers children more active choices.

Several factors make interest areas work well.

In most early childhood classrooms, you will find interest areas for dramatic play, block building, table toys, art, looking at books, and sand and water play. Other activity choices such as cooking, music and movement, and computers may be offered without creating an area if space is limited.

In setting up your indoor environment, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Quiet areas (such as books, art, table toys, and private spaces) should be separated from noisier areas (such as blocks and house corner).
- Materials used together should be grouped together (e.g., crayons near drawing paper, block props near the blocks).
- Shelves, furniture, and carpets define areas.
- The art area should have a washable floor and be located near water.
- Blocks need clearly marked floor space and protection from traffic. Flat carpeting is best for this area.
- The library corner needs good light.
- An area large enough to accommodate the whole group should be designated for circle time. (This might be the library or block area.)

The chart that follows offers suggestions on how to arrange each interest area and describes what children are likely to do in each area.

Interest Area	Arrangement	What Children Do
Blocks	Away from line of traffic May be next to dramatic play area so activities can spill over Defined by low, open shelves Smooth, carpeted floor Wooden unit blocks stored on shelves by size and shape Props (people, animals, vehicles), small blocks, and construction materials in open containers	Learn about sizes and shapes Solve problems Cooperate to build group projects Engage in pretend play Grasp basic numerical concepts Use their creativity Lift and carry blocks
Art	Near the sink Washable floor Two-sided easels Table and chairs Materials stored in separate containers on low open shelf	Express ideas and feelings Develop small motor skills as they learn to use paint brushes, crayons, scissors Explore materials and make discoveries
Dramatic Play or House Corner	May be next to block area so activities can spill over Defined by shelves and furniture Child-size furniture and equipment (stove, table and chairs, stove, refrigerator) Dress-up clothes hung on low hooks Pots, pans, and other kitchen equipment stored on shelves or hung on peg board Props stored on low open shelf	Act out familiar adult roles (play house) Conquer fears (e.g., going to the dentist or being a scary monster) Learn to get along with other children Develop social skills—sharing, negotiating, compromising, appreciating other people Develop abstract thinking skills—creating mental images, relating one event to another Use small muscle skills
Sand and Water	Near a source of water Washable floor Smocks and a variety of props stored within children's reach	Release tension Learn about shape, size, and volume Use their creativity Make discoveries Cooperate with others Use small muscle skills

Interest Area	Arrangement	What Children Do
Library	In a quiet corner Carpeted floor Good light Comfortable places to sit Books reflecting children's culture and ethnicity, displayed on a stand with covers facing out A small table and chairs Materials for writing stored in open containers on low open shelves	Look at books Read books with an adult Look at pictures and letters Spend time alone Listen to books on tape Use small muscle skills Share a favorite story with a friend
Table Toys or Manipulatives	Away from noisy areas such as blocks and dramatic play Defined by low shelves Table and chairs Toys (e.g., beads and laces, bottle caps to sort, pegs and pegboards) stored in open containers on shelves Puzzles stored on racks	Notice the characteristics of things Group items by category Make patterns Use creativity Use small muscle skills Work independently or in a small group
Computers	Away from water, food, and paint Next to another quiet area such as the library Good lighting that does not cause glare on computer screens One or more computers and a printer set up against a wall or divider Two chairs at each computer Electrical cords out of children's reach Developmentally appropriate software stored within children's reach	Follow directions Use creativity Develop a sense of competence Spend time with an adult—as a teacher and a learner Learn by experimenting Cooperate with other children Share knowledge with another child

You may need to adapt the environment for children with special needs.

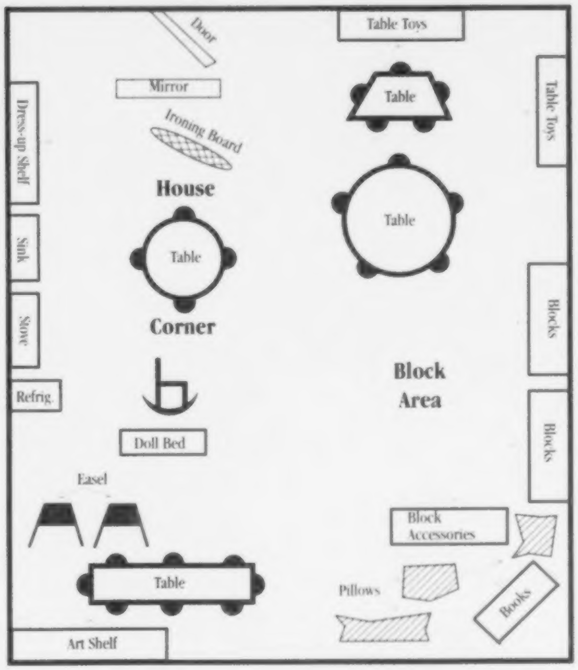
If you have children with physical disabilities in your program you will need to ensure that the space is safe and accessible. An expert consultant can help you to evaluate your classroom and outdoor areas to determine what changes, if any, are needed to encourage each child's full participation. You may take steps such as the following:

- Ensure that traffic patterns between interest areas are wide enough for a child using a wheel chair or a walker.
- Adjust tables so wheelchairs will fit underneath or equip them with trays. Provide tall stools so other children can sit comfortably at a raised table.
- Provide bolsters or other supports so children with mobility impairments can do activities on the floor.
- Provide adaptive equipment for standing.
- Use puzzles with knobs for children with visual impairments.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you identify strengths and weaknesses of two different floor plans of a preschool classroom. Then you draw a plan of your own classroom and decide what changes you want to make to improve the learning environment.

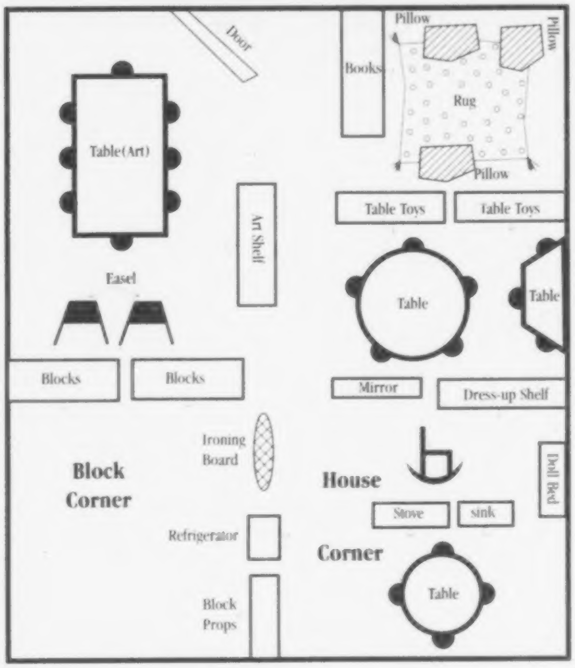
Classroom Arrangements[1]


Door
Table Toys
Mirror
Table
Table Toys
Ironing Board
Dress-up Shelf
House
Table
Table
Sink
Stove
Corner
Blocks
Block Area
Refrig.
Doll Bed
Blocks
Easel
Block Accessories
Table
Pillows
Books
Art Shelf

Plan A

Strengths:

Weaknesses:


Door
Pillow
Pillow
Books
Rug
Table(Art)
Pillow
Table Toys
Table Toys
Art Shelf
Easel
Table
Table
Blocks
Blocks
Mirror
Dress-up Shelf
Ironing Board
Block Corner
House
Doll Bed
Stove
sink
Refrigerator
Corner
Table
Block Props

Plan B

What has changed?

How is this arrangement better?

Compare your answers to those on the answer sheet at the end of this module.

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[1] From Diane Trister Dodge, *A Guide for Supervisors and Trainers on Implementing the Creative Curriculum, Third Edition* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1993), p. 81.

Use the space below to draw a plan of your classroom as it is now arranged.

On the basis of what you have learned in this module, what changes/additions do you want to make? Retrace your floor plan to show this new arrangement.

Discuss the new floor plan with your colleagues. Decide what changes you will make. Use the space below to record how children respond to these changes. Then discuss this learning activity with your trainer.

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IV. Selecting and Displaying Materials

In this activity you will learn to:

- Select materials that reflect the abilities and interests of your current group of children
- Display and label materials so children can find what they need and clean up

Well stocked interest areas invite children to play.

For interest areas to work, teachers have to select materials that are appropriate. This means the children have the skills to use materials well. Equally important is how teachers organize and display materials so that children can find what they need and take responsibility for returning materials when they are finished. When interest areas are thoughtfully stocked and organized, children are more likely to make good use of them and to learn from their play.

Selecting the right materials for each interest area depends partly on what materials are available in your center. In an established center, each room already has a supply of materials and toys appropriate for the age group of the children. However, there are ways to expand this supply. You can rotate toys, using them for a few weeks and then putting them away for a while. Children will find matching games or props for the block area just as interesting in January as they were in September if they have been out of sight for several months in between. Some teachers trade toys with another classroom to give each group of children a greater variety of interesting materials.

Many excellent materials for preschool children can be collected and brought from home. For example, you can bring in dress-up clothes, props for the house corner, plastic bottles and measuring cups for the water table, bottle caps to sort and match, and collections for the science table. Finally, you can add to your supply of materials by making games to challenge children's growing interests.

Teachers must continually evaluate the appropriateness of materials.

In selecting materials, ask yourself these questions.

- Will it interest the children? Your daily observations of the children will help you identify children's interests.
- Do the children have the skills to handle it? For example, are they ready for ten-piece puzzles or only for puzzles with five pieces?
- Will it challenge children to think and explore? Assorted buttons or bottle caps will be just as interesting as colored shapes for sorting.

- Does it reflect the families and cultural backgrounds of the children? Pictures in children's books, wooden figures for the block area, and dolls in the house corner should reflect the diversity of our society and help children accept and respect these differences.

- Does it show people with handicapping conditions engaged in meaningful tasks?

- Does it promote equal use by boys and girls? Be sure, for example, to include male dress-up clothes in the house corner, and pictures that show men and women in different types of roles.

- Is it durable and in good condition? This means no broken parts and no missing pieces. Materials should be clean and free of splinters or any jagged edges.

- Are there sufficient open-ended materials that encourage children's creativity? Blocks, art materials, and many table toys can be used in a variety of ways.

- Does it help achieve your goals for children? For example, will it help children develop creativity? Learn to think? Develop language skills? Develop small and large muscle control?

(In Modules 4 through 10 you will find many ideas for selecting materials that will promote children's physical, cognitive, social, and language development.)

Take time to organize materials logically and display them attractively.

The organization and display of materials in the classroom is as important as what you put out. Interest areas will work much better if the materials are well-organized and inviting to children.

- Identify a specific place for each of the materials in the room.

- Group materials used together (e.g., crayons and markers with paper, utensils with playdough, small cars and figures with blocks).

- Make picture labels tapes for the shelves so that children can find and return the materials they use. Cover them with clear Contact paper or laminate them to make them last.

- Store toys with small parts or pieces in open, labeled containers, such as boxes or dish pans.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you use a checklist to identify the materials and equipment typically found in nine interest areas. Read over the list and make a check beside each item you now have in your room. There are spaces for you to add items to the list.

House Corner

This area for dramatic play begins with a home setting but can be adapted as children's play themes expand to the larger community.

Equipment and Furniture

__ Stove
__ Sink
__ Cabinet
__ Refrigerator
__ Small table and two to three chairs
__ Sturdy bed that holds a child
__ High chair
__ Full length mirror
__ A place to hang dress-up clothes

Props and Materials

__ Dishes and silverware
__ Pots and pans
__ Cooking utensils
__ Aprons
__ Pot holders
__ Toasters
__ Dolls (reflecting children's ethnicity)
__ Prop boxes on varied themes
__ ____________________
__ ____________________
__ Tablecloth
__ Dress-up clothes for men and women
__ Telephones (at least two)
__ Magazines, paper, pens
__ Suitcases and pocketbooks
__ Hats
__ Shoes
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

Table Toys

Good table toys help children distinguish likenesses and differences and promote small muscle control and eye-hand coordination.

__ A low shelf to display toys
__ A low table with four to five chairs
__ A puzzle rack
__ A selection of puzzles (about five)
__ Pegs and pegboards
__ Beads and laces
__ Parquetry blocks
__ Colored inch cube blocks
__ Collections for sorting and classifying
__ ____________________
__ ____________________
__ Attribute blocks
__ Nesting cups or rings
__ Cuisenaire Rods
__ Homemade games
__ Bristle Blocks
__ Tinker Toys
__ Stacking rings
__ Sewing cards
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

Block Area

Unit blocks help children learn about sizes and shapes and develop a concrete understanding of math concepts. Through dramatic play with blocks and props, children deepen their understanding about the world around them.

__ Low shelves for storage (preferably two)
__ Colored inch cubes for decorating buildings
__ Unit blocks in a variety of sizes and shapes
__ Wood or rubber animals (zoo and farm)
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

__ Small cars and trucks
__ Traffic signs
__ Wood or rubber people
__ Paper, markers, and tape
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

Art Area

Stock the art area with a rich selection of materials that will encourage children to explore, create, and express themselves.

__ A two-sided easel
__ Paint brushes with long and short handles
__ Paint holders
__ Crayons—large and of good quality
__ Water-based paint in a variety of colors
__ Assorted water-based markers
__ Large school pencils
__ Sponges for clean up
__ Collage items (fabric, buttons, feathers, yarn, ribbon)
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

__ Glue
__ Fingerpaint paper
__ Easel paper
__ Drawing paper
__ Construction paper
__ Playdough and utensils
__ Scissors
__ Smocks
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

Library

A selection of different types of books exposes children to the wonderful world of literature. Keep on hand children's favorites and regularly add new books to attract children's attention and interest.

__ A display shelf for books (one that shows front cover)
__ Several large pillows
__ Books in good condition
__ Books showing men and women in different roles
__ Books appropriate for the children's ages
__ A record player with headphones and records
__ Puppets
__ Paper and writing tools
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

__ A small table with two or three chairs
__ Soft carpeting
__ Books on a variety of topics
__ Books showing different ethnic groups
__ Decorations (a plant, pictures on walls, a tablecloth)
__ A tape recorder with headphones and cassettes
__ A flannel board
__ Rubber letter stamps and ink pads
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

Computers

__ Macintosh IILC, IBM, or IBM compatible with monitor
__ Keyboard
__ Surge protector
__ Diskettes and diskette holders or storage container
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

__ Printer and paper
__ Computer cables
__ Software
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

Large Muscle Area

__ A large indoor climber
__ A loft with a ladder
__ Cardboard cartons for children to crawl into
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

__ A set of large hollow blocks
__ Large-wheeled toys
__ A balance beam
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

Sand and Water

__ A sand and water table
__ Basins to hold sand and water
__ A shelf or box to hold equipment
__ Waterproof aprons
__ A supply of empty plastic squeeze bottles
__ Funnels
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

__ Plastic pitchers
__ Plastic basters or eye droppers
__ Plastic hoses
__ Plastic boats
__ Measuring cups
__ Sponges and mops for clean up
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

Science

__ A table or shelf for display
__ Animal(s) in a cage and food
__ Fish bowl
__ Balance scales
__ Magnifying lenses
__ Tape measure
__ Paper and writing tools
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

__ Display table (for collections)
__ Books related to the displays
__ Old appliances to take apart
__ Magnets and an assortment of metal objects
__ Seeds growing
__ A Slinky
__ ______________________________
__ ______________________________

Woodworking

Real tools and soft wood are essential for a successful woodworking area.

__ A sturdy workbench (or homemade substitute)
__ Soft wood
__ A pegboard or shelf for storing tools
__ Hammers
__ Screwdriver and screws
__ Assorted objects: wooden wheels, leather scraps
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

__ A vise
__ Sandpaper
__ Saws
__ Nails with large heads
__ Hand drills
__ ____________________
__ ____________________

After identifying the materials you have in your classroom, use the checklist below to assess how you have organized and displayed these materials in your classroom.

	Yes	No
There is a specific place for each type of material.	☐	☐
Materials used together are grouped together.	☐	☐
All materials have picture labels.	☐	☐
Toys with small parts are kept in labeled containers.	☐	☐

Review your responses with your trainer and colleagues and determine what changes you will make in your classroom. If you make any changes, use the space below to record how children react.

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V. Organizing the Outdoor Environment

In this activity you will learn to:

- Organize the outdoor environment to offer children a variety of choices
- Determine what materials and equipment are needed to improve your outdoor space

The outdoor environment provides a whole new world for children to learn about and to explore. New scenery and a change of pace are good for children's emotional and physical health and well-being. Playing outdoors is also a good way for children to release pent-up energy. The outdoor space is as important as the classroom, and teachers need to plan outdoor activities as carefully as they plan indoor ones.

The outdoor environment offers children a wide range of experiences.

Whether your program operates in a rural, suburban, or city environment, the outdoors can provide a variety of new experiences to children. Probably no other area of an early childhood environment is as variable as the outdoor space. Some programs have only blacktop and a fence surrounding their outdoor space; others have natural surroundings that provide softness and invite exploration. Even in the most limited outdoor environments, there is much you can do to offer children a range of outdoor experiences.

If possible, the outdoor environment should include the following:

- easy access to and from the indoor space used by the program
- a drinking fountain and water spigot for attaching a hose
- nearby bathrooms
- a storage shed outdoors or indoors, near the door to the outdoor area
- soft materials such as sawdust, sand, or bark under swings, slides, and climbers
- a paved or hard-surfaced area for riding, skating, chalk drawings, and games
- a covered area for use in wet weather
- sunny areas

- shady areas
- places to be alone or with one or two friends (boxes, tents, logs, bushes)
- open, grassy spaces for tumbling, running, and sitting
- open fields for active or group play.

(See Module 1, Safe, for information on the characteristics of safe playgrounds.)

Children and staff need to dress for the weather.

You and the children will feel more comfortable outdoors if you are dressed appropriately for the weather. On cold days this includes dressing in layers (long sleeve shirt, sweater, and coat), and wearing a hat and gloves or mittens. On warm days, dress in loose clothing made from light fabrics, and perhaps wear a hat with a visor. You can keep on hand a box of extra clothes: loose T-shirts, shorts, and baseball caps in the summer; and scarves, hats, gloves, and sweaters in the winter.

The outdoor environment may need to be modified for children with special needs.

Children with special needs benefit from outdoor time, just as do all children. However, depending on the type and severity of the disability, the outdoors can be overwhelming and even frightening to a child who is unsure of how to get around an open space safely.

A good place to start in analyzing your outdoor space is to evaluate it from the child's point of view. A child with a visual disability will need help in navigating around the space. You will have to orient the child to the location of different play structures. Allow the child to touch the equipment as you describe its features and guide the child's first attempts. Stay close by to supervise and teach other children to assist those with visual impairments.

For children with hearing problems, point out possible hazards such as swings. Remind children to look carefully in all directions before running across the yard.

Special adaptations may be necessary for children with physical disabilities. Here are some suggestions:

- Provide bucket seats or straps on swings.
- Build ramps over uneven surfaces or on inclines for children in wheel chairs or who have poor balance.
- Place handholds and rails on climbing equipment and structures.
- Offer activities such as sand and water play and art on a table so children in wheelchairs can participate with others.
- Place straps on pedals of wheel toys.

Organize the outdoor environment to offer children choices.

Like the indoor space, the outdoor environment for preschool children should offer a range of choices. In addition to traditional outdoor activities such as swinging, sliding and climbing, using open spaces for running and riding, and space for construction and digging, many indoor activities can be brought outdoors and experienced in a whole new way.

Like the indoor environment, the outdoor space can be organized by interest areas that provide a variety of materials and experiences. Locate active play areas near each other and separate them from the quieter ones. Mark off clear pathways between areas to help avoid accidents. Store equipment and materials used outdoors in a storage shed or bring them outdoors from the classroom.

The chart that follows lists the types of activities you can offer children outdoors.[2] For each activity, it identifies materials and equipment needed, and what children are likely to do.

Activity	Materials and Equipment	What Children Do
Sand Play	Large covered sand box (wooden that folds back in sections or has a tarp cover) Pails, scoops, muffin tins, shovels, molds, funnels People and animals (small, inexpensive plastic or rubber) Old toy vehicles Pine cones, stones, twigs, leaves Access to water (faucet and hose or spray bottles or containers filled with water)	"Bake" pies and cakes Make roads Build castles Create houses and towns Dig, pour, sift, mold Solve problems Cooperate with others Pretend
Water Play	Water table or large tub Wading pool that meets safety requirements Buckets (small, plastic, with handles) Large brushes Painters' hats Squeeze bottles, sponges, pails, cups Hose Sprinkler Watering cans or plastic bottles with sprinkler tops Soap Bath, laundry, and cleaning props Bubble blowing props	Release tension Learn about shape, size, and volume Use their creativity Make discoveries Cooperate with others Use small muscle skills to pour, squirt, spray, scrub Paint with water (a fence, the building) Wash doll clothes Wash objects (the picnic table, a wagon, anything that "looks dirty") Blow bubbles Run through a sprinkler

[2] Based in part on Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, Third Edition* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), pp. 331-337.

Activity	Materials and Equipment	What Children Do
Wheeled Toys	Tricycles (institutional, in 2 sizes) Wagons Wheelbarrows Scooters Large set of traffic signs Set of cones (used to mark boundaries and safety zones) Hats (truck driver, firefighter, caps)	Ride bikes, pull wagons, and push wheelbarrows Pretend to drive trucks, fire engines, ambulances, and other vehicles Follow rules and stay within boundaries Learn to share and take turns
Games	Rubber balls (different sizes) Large bats (plastic, hollow) Bean bags Parachute Balance beam Hula hoops Ropes Tunnels	Throw, kick, catch, bounce, jump, and balance Explore new ways to move their bodies Crawl forward and backward Play with a friend or a small group Develop new skills
Construction	Boards Wooden boxes Saw horses Large blocks Tires Spools (donated by phone company) Large blocks Cartons and crates Roofing materials (cardboard, blankets, sheets)	List and carry Build hideaways Pretend Cooperate with others Take "safe" risks
Gardening	Sets of gardening tools (child-sized) Watering cans Hose with spray and sprinkler attachments Seeds or plants Containers Soil (for containers) Fertilizer (out of children's reach) Trellis for climbing plants (beans, peas, morning glories) String and sticks to mark rows	Dig, rake, and hoe Learn about what makes plants grow Measure and make graphs Work as a team with others Share products of the garden

Activity	Materials and Equipment	What Children Do
Snow Play	Tub or water table to hold snow Props (shovels, molds, buckets, dowels) Snow saucers Sleds Extra hats, mittens, scarves for children and adults	Take "safe" risks Dig and mold Experiment Create
Woodworking	Workbench and/or large tree stump placed on end Safety goggles Sets of child-size tools C-clamps Vises Wood scraps (splinter-free) Nails and screws with large heads Sandpaper Metal files Rulers and measuring tapes Paint Decorations (bottle caps, wooden spools, wire, cork, popsicle sticks, dowels)	Hammer, saw, drill, carry wood, sand, file, pull out nails, and fasten screws Use creativity Socialize with others Learn new words to describe their skills Measure, compare, learn about size and shape
Art	Easels Paints Paper Brushes Crayons Clothesline and clothes pins Collage items Glue Scissors Chalk Yarn String Any other items from indoors that children enjoy using	Paint Draw Express creativity Find new ways to use materials Participate in small group activities Cooperate and share Solve problems Experiment Draw on the sidewalk Weave

Activity	Materials and Equipment	What Children Do
Quiet Activities	Games Puzzles Legos Beads and laces Pegs and pegboards Books CD or tape player with CDs or tapes and headphones Table blocks Collections Any other items from indoors that children enjoy using	Spend time alone or with one or two others Solve problems Use creativity Sort and categorize Listen to music
Science and Nature	Pets Pet food, cages, water bottles Large and hand-held magnifying glasses Containers for collections Trowels Thermometers Rain and snow gauge	Care for and play with pets Dig in the dirt to see what lives there Examine natural items with hand lens Make collections Observe and categorize Learn new words Compare the temperatures in sunny and shady areas Graph rain and snowfall

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you identify the types of activities you now offer children outdoors. Then you select three new activities, or activities you want to improve, and list the materials and equipment you want to add to your outdoor environment. After introducing the materials to children, observe what they do and note your observations on the chart provided.

Improving the Outdoor Environment

Check the activities you now offer children outdoors:

____ sand play

____ water play

____ snow play

____ quiet activities

____ wheeled toys

____ art

____ woodworking

____ science and nature

____ construction

____ gardening

____ games

Select three activities to add or improve. Record what materials and equipment you add and what children do.

Activity	Materials and Equipment	What Children Do

After completing this chart, discuss with your trainer the changes you made and how children responded.

VI. Planning the Daily Schedule, Routines, and Transitions

In this activity you will learn to:

- Plan a daily schedule and routines that meet children's developmental needs
- Use transitions as learning times

The daily schedule should offer a balance of activities and be predictable.

The daily schedule states the sequence of the day's activities and tells when they will occur and for how long. When the schedule is consistent from day to day, children can predict what will happen. This predictability helps children feel more secure. The following are characteristics of a well-planned schedule.

- The day is **balanced** between active and quiet times; large group, small group, and individual activities; child-initiated and adult-led activities; and indoor and outdoor play periods.
- There is **sufficient time for transitions** so children don't have to hurry.
- There is **a long block of time for free play** when children can choose their own activities and pursue their own interests.
- **Outdoor play** is planned for at least 45 minutes. Programs operating for four or more hours have outdoor play twice a day.
- Children spend **very little time in large group activities.** Young children develop social skills by playing with one or two other children. After successfully playing in small groups, they are better able to participate in a large group activity.

A picture of the schedule helps children learn the order of the day.

A pictorial representation of the schedule helps children actually see the order of daily events. This can be done using drawings or photographs. For example, a series of photographs could show children arriving in the morning, playing at the interest centers, getting ready to go outdoors, playing outside, and so on. This can be particularly helpful for children who have very little consistency in their lives and do not have a sense of control over what takes place.

When they first enter the program in the morning, children might need reminders of what happens during the day. For example, "During free play we usually stay indoors. We'll go outside after snack." Children will feel empowered when they can state with accuracy what will take place next, "First I eat lunch. Then I brush my teeth."

The schedule should provide opportunities for children to develop important skills.

While allowing for individual differences among children, the daily schedule should incorporate many opportunities for children to develop skills as they go about activities.

Language skills develop whenever children talk with each other and with adults, for example, during dramatic play, water and sand play, art experiences, block play, music and movement activities, and snack.

Physical skills develop as children use tools and art materials, climb to the top of the loft, jump in a pile of pillows, ride a tricycle, pull a wagon, build with blocks, and play catch with a friend or teacher.

Social skills grow as children learn to make friends, negotiate, handle disagreements, and feel and express empathy for others. Teachers can help children develop social skills by asking two children to help each other, inviting a child to enter a dramatic play theme, or modeling social skills by joining in children's play.

Cognitive skills develop as children explore the materials in the water table to see what floats or sinks, build a complex block structure, combine paint colors at the easel, and figure out a way to take turns carrying a favorite pocketbook.

Self-help skills are reinforced as children put on and take off dress-up clothes, set the table in the house corner, and select and put away toys.

Coping skills develop as children learn to deal with frustration when a puzzle piece won't fit or another child gets to the last empty swing first.

Routines can offer opportunities for learning.

Routines are the events that take place ever day: arriving and leaving, eating, sleeping or resting, toileting, dressing and undressing, and cleaning up. They can take up significant portions of day, but it's a mistake to view them as "chores," to be quickly accomplished so children can move on to more meaningful activities. Instead, routines are opportunities to help children feel secure and to build their self-confidence. For example, children learn that each day after eating lunch, they go to the sink to brush their teeth and wash their hands, get their blankets from their cubbies, and go to their cots (ideally, children consistently use the same cot, set up in the same place in the room). Participating in routines allows children to develop:

- small muscle skills as they brush teeth, pour juice, serve themselves, and zip or button clothing;
- large muscle skills as they help set up cots or arrange chairs around a table;
- social and language skills as they talk with each other and adults during relaxed, family-style meals;
- self-help skills as they wash their own hands before and after eating;
- cognitive skills such as one-to-one correspondence as they set places at the table, putting utensils, plate, cup, and napkin at each place; and
- social skills as they work together to prepare for a meal.

In full-day programs, the daily schedule includes a block of time when children can nap or rest while doing quiet activities. Some children find it easy to fall asleep immediately; others need extra attention to help them relax enough to fall asleep. Many teachers find it helps to rub children's backs, play music at low volume, read stories, and sing songs softly to help children fall asleep. Those who can't sleep or who get up early can benefit from a restful period of looking at books, drawing, or playing with manipulatives such as beads and laces.

Transitions can be unsettling if children don't know what to do.

Transitions—the periods of time between one activity and the next—can be learning opportunities or problem times. If children have nothing to do while waiting, they may become restless. They sometimes act in ways that teachers don't like—wrestling with one another or running around the room. This is because they are bored.

During a transition, there are often some children who are still busy completing an activity and some just waiting for the next one. If one teacher is helping the children who are finishing an activity and the other teacher plans something for the rest of the group, transitions usually run more smoothly.

Here are some additional tips for making transitions go better:

Give children a warning. "In five minutes it will be time to clean up."

Involve children in transition activities. Children can help with activities such as setting the tables for meals, collecting the trash, washing the paint brushes.

Provide clear directions. State them clearly and simply. "Please find your mat and sit in the listening area. I'll be right there to read a story."

Be flexible whenever possible. Allow children extra time to complete special projects or activities when they seem very interested and involved. "We're going to let the block builders finish their building while the rest of us start to clean up. Then we can all hear about what happened in the block corner today."

Allow children to share their work. Children are often more willing to clean up if they have an opportunity to share and talk about their work. Gather the children in the meeting area after choice time and before clean up while their work is still evident. Invite children to talk about what they did, and then ask for volunteers to clean up each of the areas.

Keep children occupied. If children have something specific to do, they are less likely to act disruptively. For example, those who are finished eating or cleaning up could take a book to look at while they wait for the others, or get their coats on and go outside with one teacher.

Establish a signal for quiet. When the noise level gets too disruptive, use a signal such as a bell, an autoharp, raising hands, or blinking the lights to get children's attention.

Transitions can be learning times.

Transition times can be used to teach new concepts, to practice skills, and to enhance creativity. Here are some suggestions for making transitions important learning times.

- Play a game of follow the leader. You can lead the children in picking up toys, going outdoors, making funny gestures, and so forth.
- Call out different categories as you move children from one activity time to another. ("If you're wearing red today, you can get your coat on." "Everyone wearing sneakers with laces can go quietly to the juice table.")
- Ask children to try out unusual ways to move. ("Let's go to our meeting place like big, slow, heavy elephants.")
- When you want children to be quiet so they can listen to you, play a clapping game—clap out different beats, loud and soft, and get children to follow.
- Learn finger plays that you can teach the children or special songs you can sing.
- Ask children to help each other. ("Kim, can you please help Sara find her mittens?")

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review a sample daily schedule and identify what makes it appropriate for preschool children. Then you assess the appropriateness of your schedule and decide whether you want to make any changes.

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Sample Daily Schedule

7:30 - 8:15	**Children Arrive:** Children participate in quiet activities and prepare for breakfast.	**Early Morning Schedule**
8:15 - 9:00	**Breakfast and Clean-Up:** As children finish breakfast, they may read books or listen to music until all are ready for the next activity.	
9:00 - 9:15	**Group Time:** A teacher leads one or more of the following activities: • conversation • sharing • music and movement • stories • flannel board • finger plays	**Morning Schedule**
9:15 - 10:30	**Choice Time:** Children choose activities in the following areas: • art • books • house corner • blocks • table toys • sand and water	
10:30 - 10:45	**Clean Up:** Children put away toys and materials.	
10:45 - 11:00	**Snack:** Children help set the tables and eat a snack together.	
11:00 - 11:45	**Outdoor Play:** Children select from a variety of activities such as sand play; using balls, jump ropes, and large wheeled toys; gardening; painting; caring for pets; swinging; climbing; and so on.	
11:45 - 12:00	**Story Time and Preparing to Go Home** (for morning programs): The group gathers for a story and to review the day. Then children prepare to go home.	
12:00 - 1:00	**Prepare for Lunch, Eat, Clean Up** (for full-day programs): Assigned children help set the tables for lunch; others wash their hands and find their place mats. Children and teachers enjoy a family-style meal. As children finish lunch, they go to the bathroom in small groups and read books on their cots in preparation for nap time.	**Lunch**

Lunch (continued)

1:00 - 1:10	**Quiet Activity Prior to Nap:** Children hear a story or song by a teacher, classical music, or a story record.
1:10 - 3:00	**Rest Time:** Teachers help children settle down and relax. Children who do not sleep or who awaken are offered books, table toys, and other quiet activities.

Afternoon Schedule

3:00 - 3:30	**Snack and Preparation to Go Outdoors:** Children help set the tables for snack and prepare for the next activity.
3:30 - 4:30	**Outdoor Play:** Children select from a variety of outdoor activities such as sand play; using balls, jump ropes, and large wheeled toys; gardening; painting; caring for pets; swinging; climbing; and so on.
4:30 -6:00	**Choice Time and Going Home:** Children select from activities such as: • table toys • stories • board games • songs, finger plays, or music • coloring Teachers talk informally with family members as children are picked up.

Why is this schedule appropriate for preschool children?

Daily Schedule

How does your schedule measure up to the guidelines? Review the schedule you now follow and assess whether it meets the criteria you listed. Decide on any changes you want to make. Then, use the space below to record your daily schedule.

Time	**Activity**

Discuss your schedule with your colleagues and your trainer.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills in creating a learning environment for preschool children.

Before you go on to the next module, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about creating a good learning environment during the time you were working on this module. Compare your ideas to those in the completed chart at the end of the module.
- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned, and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are areas you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 145-147)

Organizing Indoor and Outdoor Areas That Encourage Play and Exploration

1. **What did Mr. Lopez know about the children?**
   a. *The children acted frustrated when they could not get equipment they wanted.*

   b. *Some children's play and work was being interrupted by other children playing ball.*

2. **How did Mr. Lopez organize the outdoor area so it would encourage play and exploration?**
   a. *He made sure the toys and equipment were easy to find and within children's reach.*

   b. *He designated certain areas for specific activities to protect quiet play and to give children space for active play.*

Selecting and Attractively Displaying Materials and Equipment

1. **What did Ms. Williams know about the children?**
   a. *They were concerned about the classmate who was in the hospital.*

   b. *Some children appeared especially anxious.*

   c. *The children would probably be very interested in the hospital prop box and water play.*

2. **What activities and materials did Ms. Williams plan to offer for the children and why?**
   a. *She prepared a hospital prop box and put out books about going to the hospital.*

   b. *She planned a water-play activity because she knew it was a calming activity.*

Planning and Implementing a Schedule, Routines, and Transitions to Meet Children's Needs

1. **How did Ms. Richards use block clean up as an opportunity for learning?**
   a. *She demonstrated what it means to cooperate and help others by participating in clean up.*

   b. *She made up a game of finding different shapes to clean up, thus teaching children the names of the block shapes and practicing classification.*

   c. *She gave the children a chance to identify blocks they wanted to clean up, thus reinforcing classification skills.*

2. **What did Ms. Kim do to make sure that the children who were finished cleaning up had something tc do?**
   a. *She spoke to each group of children and told them to select a book to look at in the meeting area.*

   b. *She made sure that the children knew what to do and where to go when they were finished.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment

(p. 155)

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Create a Learning Environment**
They enjoy large muscle activities such running, jumping, climbing, and riding tricycles.	*Set aside an indoor area for large play equipment. Plan some activities that use large muscles (for example, pounding clay or dough, woodworking). Make sure the outdoor area is safe for running and climbing.*
They are gaining increasing control of small muscles.	*Set out toys with small pieces (for example, pegs and pegboards, laces and beads, Legos). Provide art materials such as markers, playdough, clay, and scissors.*
They are learning to share and take turns.	*Provide duplicates of some popular toys and materials. Show children how long they have to wait. Use a clock or a timer, or write their names on a list to help them learn to share.*
They can play cooperatively with one or two others and often have "best friends."	*Plan lots of small group activities. Define small areas for activities where several children can work together. Put out props for dramatic play and encourage children to play together.*
They sometimes need to get away from the group and be by themselves.	*Set up areas where children can be alone—a large stuffed chair, a loft, or a big cardboard box to hide in, and a listening area with headphones.*
They have a lot of energy but can easily tire.	*Plan a schedule that offers a balance of active and quiet activities and provides children with choices. Include soft places such as pillows and bean-bag chairs in which children can relax.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment

(p. 156)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Create a Learning Environment
They like to be helpful.	*Decide on jobs that children can do alone or with adult help and make a job chart. Make name cards to show who has each job (for example, feeding pets, watering plants, setting tables, passing out snacks).*
They can take responsibility for keeping the classroom orderly.	*Carefully organize materials. Put things together that are used together (for example, put crayons and markers near drawing paper). Make picture labels to put on shelves to show where items belong, to help children see that everything has a place.*
They love to play make-believe. Their dramatic play goes from family roles to people in the community and super-heroes.	*Set up a dramatic play area that looks like a home. Put out dress-up clothes, kitchen utensils, and so on. Gradually add different kinds of props—for example, for playing hospital, fire-fighter, grocery store, or shoe store—to encourage dramatic play.*
They have lots of interests.	*Find out about children's interests through observations and conversations with parents. Give lots of choices. Add new materials and new toys so children often find something new to do.*
They draw pictures and create objects that represent real things.	*Keep crayons, markers, and large pencils on low shelves for use every day. Give children a good supply of unit blocks and props (for example, farm and zoo animals, people, cars). Talk with children about what they do.*

Classroom Arrangements

(p. 167)

Floor Plan A

Strengths:

- *The table toys are stored on shelves near the tables where they will be used.*
- *The book area is in a protected corner.*
- *Materials for each area are grouped together.*

Weaknesses:

- *Shelves are not used to define areas—there are no enclosed areas.*
- *The open spaces invite children to run.*
- *The block area is too open—buildings will be knocked down.*
- *The book corner (a quiet area) is right near the block area so children will be disturbed.*

Floor Plan B

What has changed?

- *Shelves are used to define different interest areas.*
- *Tables are moved to interest areas.*
- *The table toy area is enclosed by shelves and away from the line of traffic.*
- *Easels are in a protected area.*
- *The block area is protected and near other active areas.*
- *The book area is far from noisy interest areas and looks secluded and cozy.*

Why is this arrangement better?

- *Children are less likely to run in this room.*
- *Children will feel more protected in each interest area.*
- *The block area is enclosed so structures are less likely to be knocked down.*
- *Quiet interest areas (art, table toys, and books) are grouped together.*
- *Locating the house corner and block corner together promotes dramatic play.*
- *Materials are stored on shelves in the areas where they are to be used.*

Daily Schedule Checklist

(p. 187)

An appropriate daily schedule should offer:

- *A balance of active and quiet activities.*
- *At least one hour for choice time.*
- *Sufficient time for routines.*
- *Time for children to work together in large and small group times.*
- *Time to read story books to the whole group.*
- *One or two periods of outdoor time.*
- *Sufficient time for transitions.*

Glossary

Daily schedule

How you anticipate and plan for the day's activities. The schedule includes the times of day and the order in which activities will occur.

Learning environment

The complete makeup of the classroom and outdoor space including how it is arranged and furnished, materials and equipment, planned and unplanned activities.

Routines

Scheduled activities that occur every day, including meals, naps, toileting, washing hands, and going outdoors. All of these can offer opportunities for children to learn.

Transitions

The in-between times in a daily schedule when children have completed an activity period and are moving to the next one.

Module 4: Physical

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Overview

Promoting physical development involves:

- Providing materials, equipment, and opportunities for gross motor development
- Providing materials and opportunities for fine motor development
- Reinforcing and encouraging children's physical fitness

We adults use a wide range of physical skills every day. We walk and run, often several miles a day. We open car doors, carry boxes, and climb stairs. We grasp pencils, forks, cups, and other small items and use tools such as scissors and computer keyboards. Because we use our large and small muscles so frequently, we rarely think about the skills involved. In fact, however, we developed these skills through many years of practice.

Physical development involves the use and coordination of fine and gross motor skills.

Physical development refers to the gradual gaining of control over large and small muscles. It includes acquiring gross motor skills—such as crawling, walking, running, and throwing—and fine motor skills—such as holding, pinching, and flexing fingers and toes. Coordinating movement is an important part of physical development. For example, most children refine eye-hand coordination—the ability to direct finger, hand, and wrist movements—during their preschool years. They use eye-hand coordination to accomplish fine motor tasks, such as fitting a piece in a puzzle or using a fork or spoon. Children use their senses—especially sight, sound, and touch—to coordinate the movements of their large and small muscles.

A tremendous amount of physical development takes place during the first five years of life. During this time, young children learn to control their muscles and practice the physical skills they will use for the rest of their lives. They use their large and small muscles, along with all their senses, to make discoveries about their world and the effects of their actions. Therefore, it is crucial for children to have many opportunities to move their bodies and use their physical skills.

Physical fitness is tied to self-esteem.

Physical fitness is important for everyone. Most young children do not have to be reminded to move their bodies. Infants will gleefully kick their legs and reach for objects. Toddlers often push, pull, and turn over anything they can get their hands or feet on. And preschool children delight in running and climbing as well as in building and knocking down. When children have opportunities to eat healthy foods and exercise their bodies, their fitness increases. If physical fitness habits are introduced in the preschool years, children are more likely to become adults with healthy lifestyles.

Physical fitness is related to a child's positive sense of self. Many children develop views of themselves and attitudes about attempting new tasks on the basis of how they feel about their bodies and what they think they can or cannot do physically. Young children who have had many successful experiences using their fine and gross motor skills tend to feel competent. This sense of competence carries over into other activities. They are likely to continue exploring materials and attempting new challenges without worrying about failure.

Adults reinforce physical development and fitness in a variety of ways.

Early childhood programs and teachers play important roles in promoting children's physical skills. Quality programs provide ample, safe spaces indoors and outdoors where children can move their bodies, use their gross motor skills, have fun, and keep fit. The daily schedule includes time for active play in an environment that allows children to use their bodies as well as all their senses while they play. Teachers offer a variety of materials and equipment so children at different skill levels can use their fine and gross motor skills safely and without frustration. For example, one child can tear paper while another uses scissors; one can pull a loaded wagon while another needs to remove some of the cargo. And perhaps most importantly, teachers reinforce fine and gross motor skills by sharing their interest and pleasure in children's growing physical accomplishments.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in promoting children's physical development. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of this module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Providing Materials, Equipment, and Opportunities for Gross Motor Development

Encourage children to use their large muscles throughout the day.	"Gabrielle and Michael, will you please help me move aside the large hollow blocks so we'll have more room for daning?"
Play indoor and outdoor noncompetitive games.	"In this game we'll all take turns going from here to the tree in different ways. Crystal, how will you go to the tree?"
Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of large muscles.	"Jan, that was a good idea. You used the hollow block as a step stool to reach the sink."
Offer indoor and outdoor activities that challenge children to improve their gross motor skills.	"Now that the children have mastered the obstacle course, they're losing interest. Let's invite them to rearrange the items to offer new challenges."
Provide a variety of materials and equipment that encourages all children to use their large muscles.	"You can walk up the ramp to get to the slide or climb up the rope ladder."

"It must be something about the rain!" Ms. Williams says to Ms. Frilles. Choice time had been very noisy as the children tested limits by crashing blocks and banging pots and pans. "I think we need to move our bodies," she tells the children. "But we can't go outside," Mark moans. "It's raining!" "You're right. It's too wet to go out. Let's clean up, then we can try some new ways to move our bodies," Ms. Williams suggests. As the last blocks are put away, Ms. Williams asks several children to help her push the shelves against the wall. "We'll need this space for moving," she tells them. Ms. Frilles uses a long rope to make a large circle in the program of the area. "I need three children to move inside this circle. Dora, Sam, and Joe, show us how many different ways you can move without bumping into each other." Ms. Frilles describes the children's movements. "Dora is jumping! Sam is galloping! Joe looks like he's floating!" Meanwhile, Ms. Williams makes several other rope circles around the room and invites the other children to join in. The children walk, hop, leap, skip, slide, and crawl. Ms. Williams exclaims, "What terrific movers!".

1. **How did the children let Ms. Williams and Ms. Frilles know they were ready for gross motor activities?**

2. **.What gross motor activities did Ms. Williams and Ms. Frilles provide?**

Providing Materials and Opportunities for Fine Motor Development

Encourage children to use their small muscles throughout the day.	"Hank, use your thumb and finger to give the fish a pinch of food."
Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of small muscles.	"Theresa, you zipped your jacket today! Good for you!"
Offer activities that challenge children to improve their fine motor skills.	"This finger play is about catching a bee. I'll teach you the words and what to do with your fingers and hands."
Provide a variety of materials that fit together so children can practice their fine motor skills.	"Peter, you made an interesting house with the table blocks, yesterday. Would you like to use them again, or try building with Lincoln Logs?"
Provide materials and activities that accommodate different skill levels.	"Lloyd and Maddie, would you like to try weaving today? We have thick and thin yarn, and two kinds of looms."
Encourage children to participate in daily routines.	"Graham, you're doing a great job using your fork to pick up the peach slices. How do they taste?"

"Here's the pitcher," says Ms. Kim to Robert. "Hold your cup with one hand so the cup won't move." Robert holds his cup and pours the milk very quickly so that it overflows. "Oops, that milk came out too fast, didn't it?" smiles Ms. Kim. "There's a sponge on the sink you can use to clean it up." While Robert gets the sponge, Shannon picks up the pitcher. "I can make it go slow, Ms. Kim. Watch me." Shannon holds the pitcher and pours the milk very slowly, stopping before it gets to the top of her cup. "Good job, Shannon," says Ms. Kim. "Your hand and arm muscles were working well. I know that Robert is going to go slower next time too." Robert nods his head as he wipes up the spilled milk. "My peas keep falling off my fork," explains Patrick. "Use your spoon, silly," says Robert. "That would help, wouldn't it?" says Ms. Kim. "What else could you do?" Shannon looks up and says, "You could stick your peas on your fork like this," and spears four peas on her fork. Several other children at the table begin spearing their peas. "Well, we certainly did solve that problem," says Ms. Kim.

1. **How did Ms. Kim encourage the children to use their small muscles?**

2. **What did Ms. Kim say to encourage the children's efforts?**

Reinforcing and Encouraging Children's Physical Fitness

Offer a variety of materials and activities that encourage children of different skill levels to be physically fit.	"We have balls of different sizes, Antonia. Pick one that feels comfortable to hold and I'll play catch with you."
Schedule time for active outdoor play every day.	"It looks like the rain has slowed to a drizzle, so let's get ready to go outdoors."
Provide opportunities for indoor active play during bad weather.	"During choice time today we'll use the hallway for trike-riding, bowling, and other activities."
Encourage children to coordinate use of their large and small muscles.	"Leroy, you worked hard to roll out the playdough. What are you making?"
Help children develop an awareness of rhythm so they can coordinate their body movements.	"Luis and Mary are hopping to the music. Marta and Pete are swaying. How else can we move to the New Shoes Dance?"
Introduce cooperative games and activities that build children's physical skills.	"You can use everything but your hands to keep the balloons in the air."
Help older children begin learning skills they can use to play sports and games.	"Yannick, put the wiffle ball on the tee. Pick up the bat with both hands near the bottom. Then, stand back and swing!"

When Ms. Diaz comes to pick up her daughter, Lindsay, she sees children steering tricycles around safety cones, pulling each other in wagons, crawling through cardboard boxes. She smiles when she finds Lindsay kicking a ball back and forth with Eula. Turning to Ms. Thomas, Ms. Diaz says, "Now that Lindsay's five, we'd like her to play soccer. Do you know of a neighborhood league for young players?" "Has Lindsay said she wants to play soccer?" asks Ms. Thomas. "No, not really," says Ms. Diaz, "but I want her to get plenty of exercise." "That's an important goal for all children," says Ms. Thomas. "We provide opportunities for children to move their bodies every day and we encourage families to exercise together. Most five-year-olds, however, aren't ready for competitive sports such as soccer. Can I tell you about the recreation center's family fun programs? I think you and Lindsay would enjoy the cooperative games they play." "Those sound interesting," says Ms. Diaz. "We could have fun and stay fit together."

1. **What outdoor activities encouraged children's physical fitness?**

2. **Why do you think Ms. Thomas suggested an alternative to soccer?**

Taking Care of Your Own Body[1]

Teachers need to take care of their own bodies.

As a teacher, you are concerned about children's physical development. However, it is essential that you take care of yourself, too. How many times a day do you:

- bend from the waist to pick up a child or an item on the floor?
- lean over a step-stool in front of a sink to wash your hands?
- sit on the floor and bend forward to play with a child?
- sit on a child-sized chair?

Try these suggestions.

The activities listed above are normal for teachers of young children. They are also activities that can produce sore backs and limbs. Here are some ways to maintain good posture and flexibility and to avoid physical pain as you care for children:

- Keep your lower back as straight as possible and avoid slouching when sitting or standing.
- Put one foot up on a stool or step when standing for a long time.
- Bend your knees, not your back, when you lean forward.
- Wear low-heeled, soft-soled, comfortable shoes to maintain proper posture.
- Bend your knees, tuck in your buttocks, and pull in your abdominal muscles when lifting a child or a heavy object.
- Avoid twisting when lifting or lowering a child or a heavy object. Hold the child or object close to you.
- Stretch your muscles before playing an active game with children. (It's a good idea for children to stretch their muscles, too.)
- Use adult-sized tables and chairs, if possible, when meeting with other adults or when participating in training.
- Talk with your supervisor and colleagues about staff coverage for short breaks. Do some stretching exercises and relax during these breaks!

Teaching is a physically demanding job. Think about your own fitness, daily movements on the job, and the work environment, and jot down brief answers to the questions that follow.

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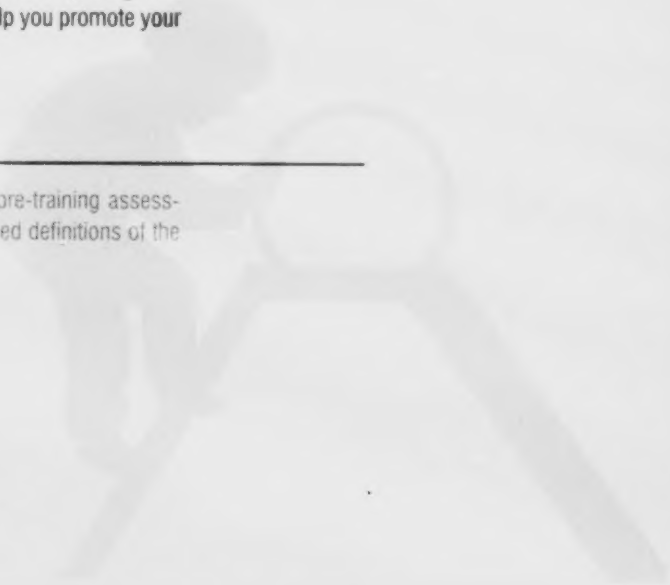
[1] Based on Susan S. Aronson, M.D., "Coping with the Physical Requirements of Caregiving," *Child Care Information Exchange* (Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc., May 1987), pp. 39-40.

Do you follow a fitness program? For example, do you walk regularly or participate in an aerobic or sports program, eat foods that provide energy and are low in fat and sugar?

How can you improve your posture and movements throughout the day? How can you expand your fitness program?

What changes to the environment or the schedule can you suggest so that you and your colleagues can avoid sore backs and limbs?

The suggestions you have just read and the ones you noted above, along with regular exercise and good health and nutrition practices, can help you promote your own physical development along with that of young children.



When you have finished this overview section, complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions of the terms that are used.

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to promote children's physical development. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Providing Materials, Equipment, and Opportunities for Gross Motor Development

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Encourage children to use their large muscles throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐
2. Play indoor and outdoor noncompetitive games.	☐	☐	☐
3. Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of large muscles.	☐	☐	☐
4. Offer indoor and outdoor activities that challenge children to improve their gross motor skills.	☐	☐	☐
5. Provide a variety of materials and equipment that encourages all children to use their large muscles.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Materials and Opportunities for Fine Motor Development

6. Encourage children to use their small muscles throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐
7. Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of small muscles.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Materials and Opportunities for Fine Motor Development

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Offer activities that challenge children to improve their fine motor skills.	☐	☐	☐
9. Provide a variety of materials that fit together so children can practice their fine motor skills.	☐	☐	☐
10. Provide materials and activities that accommodate different skill levels.	☐	☐	☐
11. Encourage children to participate in daily routines.	☐	☐	☐

Reinforcing and Encouraging Children's Physical Fitness

12. Offer a variety of materials and activities that encourage children of different skill levels to be physically fit.	☐	☐	☐
13. Schedule time for active outdoor play every day.	☐	☐	☐
14. Provide opportunities for indoor active play during bad weather.	☐	☐	☐
15. Encourage children to coordinate use of their large and small muscles.	☐	☐	☐
16. Help children develop an awareness of rhythm so they can coordinate their body movements.	☐	☐	☐

Reinforcing and Encouraging Children's Physical Fitness

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
17. Introduce cooperative games and activities that build children's physical skills.	☐	☐	☐
18. Help older children begin learning skills they can use to play sports and games.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 4, Physical.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Gross Motor Skills

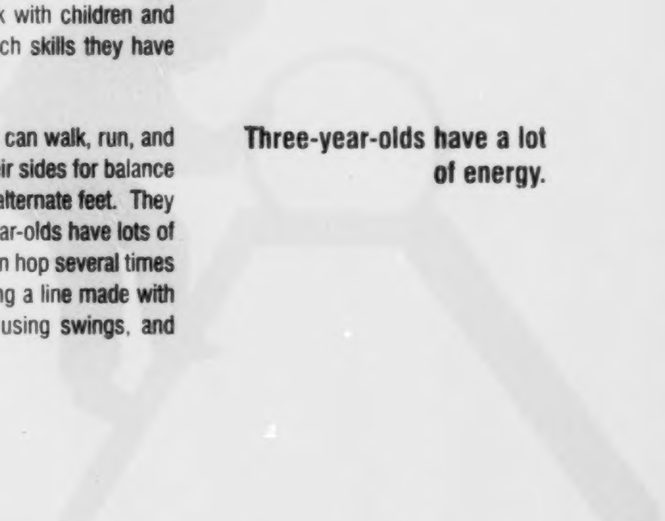
In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical gross motor skills of preschool children
- Use what you know about children to promote their gross motor skills

As with other areas of development, children's physical development follows an individual schedule for reaching milestones and mastering skills. In any group of preschoolers there is likely to be a wide range of physical abilities. For example, one three-year-old can skip with both feet, while another can skip on one foot only. Although the age when children accomplish a skill varies from child to child, the pattern rarely does. For example, children control their head movements first; then their torsos and arms, and finally their legs. Gross motor skills, such as rolling over, usually appear before those involving small muscles, such as picking up small objects. Movement normally begins with muscles close to the body center and moves outward as the child matures. To promote preschool children's gross motor skills, teachers need to observe individuals and understand the typical sequence of development.

Each child learns and uses gross motor skills according to an individual timetable.

The descriptions that follow present the sequence of gross motor development during the preschool years and the approximate ages at which children master certain skills. You will probably notice that the children in your class are developing several gross motor skills at the same time. As you work with children and observe their indoor and outdoor activities, you can learn which skills they have mastered and which ones they are developing.



Three-year-olds are usually sure and nimble on their feet. They can walk, run, and turn sharp corners with ease, often holding their arms out to their sides for balance or swinging them for sureness. They can walk up stairs using alternate feet. They will jump from the bottom stair and land on both feet. Three-year-olds have lots of energy. They like to run, gallop, and "dance" to music. They can hop several times in a row, balance on one foot for a few seconds, and walk along a line made with tape or a rope. They enjoy pushing and pedaling tricycles, using swings, and throwing, catching, and kicking large balls.

Three-year-olds have a lot of energy.

Four-year-olds can control how they use their large muscles.

Four-year-olds have all the energy of three-year-olds and greater control over their large muscles. Their running and walking movements may have sudden starts and stops. Hopping is a favorite activity; children can normally hop in a sequence of two or three hops. This leads to skipping. Children begin by skipping on one foot, then taking a walking step forward with the other. Balancing on a walking board, broad jumping, and throwing balls overhand are other favorite activities of four-year-olds. They can climb ladders and playground equipment with assurance and fearlessness. They skillfully pedal, steer, and turn corners on tricycles.

Five-year-olds can use their ball-handling skills to play games.

By age five, most children are refining their existing physical skills. They can run faster, ride tricycles with greater speed and skill, and climb higher and more freely. They can hop on one foot for a long distance and usually master skipping with alternating feet. They can also walk the full length of a balance beam without stepping off. Because five-year-olds can usually succeed in getting a ball where they want it to go, they enjoy ball games involving kicking, throwing, and catching. Some five-year-olds are learning to jump rope, do somersaults, and use an overhead ladder on a climber.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next two pages lists some typical behaviors of children in the preschool years, ages three to five. Included are behaviors relevant to physical development. The right-hand column asks you to identify ways teachers can use this information about child development to promote children's physical development. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module you will learn new strategies and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at one time. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of the module. By the time you complete all the learning activities, you will find that you have learned many ways to promote children's physical development.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Gross Motor Skills

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Gross Motor Skills**
They walk easily and can balance themselves on one foot for several seconds at a time.	*Lay a wide strip of tape to the floor so children can practice balancing while walking forwards, sideways, backwards, with arms in front or behind, and over obstacles. Use tape or unit blocks to make a walking course with turns, curves, and obstacles.*
They run, jump, and hop.	
They move to music, imitate dance movements, and make up creative ways to move.	
They throw balls overhead and catch bounced balls.	
They climb.	
They ride tricycles.	
They use playground equipment such as slides, climbers, and swings.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of ways teachers promote children's physical development.

II. Observing and Planning for Children's Fine Motor Development

In this activity you will learn to:

- Identify children's developing fine motor skills
- Plan activities that help children practice fine motor skills

Young children need to develop their small muscles for many tasks.

Young children use their small muscles for many tasks. They coordinate hands, fingers, and wrists to write and draw. They need strength in their small muscles to cut with scissors and use other tools. Control is required for buttoning, zipping, holding utensils, and other routine tasks. As children develop control and coordination of their fingers, hands, and wrists, they delight in stringing beads, completing puzzles, and placing pegs in pegboards. Fine motor skills are needed for these age-appropriate tasks and will be important later in life for writing, typing, driving, cooking, playing musical instruments, and so on.

Children learn to control and coordinate their finger, hand, and wrist movements at different rates. However, we can identify typical sequences of fine motor development and the approximate ages at which children master these skills.

Three-year-olds develop fine motor skills through routines and activities.

Although three-year-olds usually prefer large muscle activities, they are gaining greater control of their fingers, hands, and wrists. Their growing skills allow for active participation in family-style meals. They can spoon food from serving dishes, pass platters, and use spoons and forks to feed themselves. Most have learned to dress themselves. They can pull their pants up and down, put on shoes, and use large buttons and zippers. Fine motor skills allow three-year-olds to do many things for themselves. They can wash their own hands by turning the faucet on and off, pumping soap from a dispenser, and tearing paper towels off a roll. Three-year-olds enjoy using a variety of materials. They can string beads, place large pegs in pegboards, build towers and bridges with blocks, play with puzzles that have a few large pieces, use scissors to cut paper, turn the pages of a book one at a time, and explore the properties of playdough, clay, sand, and water. With practice, they progress from holding crayons with their fists to using their first two fingers and thumb. They scribble in a controlled fashion, using vertical, horizontal, and circular strokes. Three-year-olds may begin showing preference for the right or left hand.

Four-year-olds have greater control over finger, hand, and wrist movements.

Four-year-olds have more refined small muscle movements and eye-hand coordination than threes. They can cut easily with scissors and begin to draw pictures that represent real things. Some four-year-olds write recognizable letters and numbers. They can lace shoes; zip and snap most clothing; pour from small pitchers without spilling, serve and eat with a fork and spoon; and use knives for spreading and some cutting. Finger, hand, and wrist control allows them to build detailed structures with unit blocks and other construction materials. They can use tools in their hands to form shapes and objects with playdough and clay. As their coordination increases, they are able to use smaller versions of the materials they used when younger, such as Legos, beads and strings, pegs and pegboards, and construction toys.

Five-year-olds are refining their fine motor skills.

Most five-year-olds have well-developed fine motor skills. Their drawings and paintings tend to represent real objects and include much detail. They can cut shapes with scissors. They usually use all utensils properly to serve food and eat. Five-year-olds have little difficulty dressing and undressing themselves. They can handle most buttons, snaps, zippers, and buckles, and are learning to tie shoes. Most five-year-olds can reproduce some letters and numerals and write "important" words such as their names.

Children develop fine motor skills through routines and by playing with a variety of materials.

Daily routines in an early childhood classroom provide rich opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills. It may be tempting to hurry through chores such as dressing and grooming, toileting, and eating, but they deserve the same care and attention as other activities. Daily routines can offer new challenges and new ways to be independent and to make contributions to the group. For example, teachers can invite children to help prepare snacks and meals, set and clear the table, pass bowls and platters, and serve and feed themselves. Children might help mix paint, sweep or mop up a spill, wipe tables, or use the mini-vacuum to clean up some spilled fish food. All of these chores involve use of fine motor skills.

Most early childhood programs offer a variety of materials that help children develop their fine motor skills. Children can put together Legos and Unifix cubes, build roads with unit blocks, and push cars along toy highways. They might use tongs and egg beaters in the house corner, and paint brushes and playdough in the art area. Turning a jump rope outdoors allows children to coordinate wrist and hand motions. In an appropriate indoor and outdoor environment, the chances for children to use their small muscles are almost endless.

Children rely on their senses to help them coordinate fine motor movements.

Sensory awareness—using sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell to get information—is a large part of fine motor development. Activities in which children use their senses as they manipulate objects help them coordinate movements. You can encourage children to:

- serve food;
- tear, peel, slice, and scrape vegetables and fruits for snack;
- squeeze and identify objects hidden inside a bag;
- hold and pass around small canisters with various scents in them; and
- listen to small items rattle and bounce in "sound" canisters.

Children learn a variety of cognitive concepts through these types of activities, and develop fine motor skills by getting information from their senses.

Encourage children to use whichever hand they prefer.

As you observe children using their hands and fingers, you will see that most have developed a preference for using the right or left hand. Most children establish a preferred hand by age three. Some do not. It is important not to make a fuss over this preference. Encourage children to use whichever hand they prefer, by placing objects in their preferred hand. This helps children become more skilled in using the preferred hand. Most experts agree that it is inappropriate and often harmful to force a child to become right-handed if the child's preference is for the left hand.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you conduct a series of observations of two children in your class. Over a five-day period, observe each child during routines and in different interest areas during indoor and outdoor choice times. Then use your observation recordings to summarize what you learned about the children's fine motor skills and plan strategies for encouraging the children to practice and refine their skills.

Observing and Planning for Children's Fine Motor Development

(Example)

Observation Dates: *April 24-29*

Observation Summary and Plan	**Child #1:** *Emma* **Age:** *3 years, 8 months*	**Child #2:** *Tomás* **Age:** *4 years, 6 months*
What fine motor activities are easy for the child?	*Tearing paper* *Cutting fringes in paper (usually with scissors in left hand)* *Stringing large beads* *Holding a paint brush* *Brushing teeth (usually with left hand)*	*Spreading peanut butter on crackers* *Cutting pictures out of magazines* *Painting and drawing recognizable people* *Hanging up cooking utensils on pegboard*
What fine motor activities are challenging?	*Cutting a straight line across a piece of paper* *Using tongs*	*Pasting pictures where he wants them to go* *Using a computer keyboard*
How can you use what you learned to encourage this child's fine motor development?	*I can help her to identify that she is left-handed and encourage her to use this hand for tasks.* *I can show her how to make a paper chain so she will have a reason to practice cutting straight lines.*	*Tomás seems a little leery of the computer so I can ask another child to show him how to use it.* *I can plan a cooking activity—making **spreads** with fresh fruit and cream cheese.*

Observing and Planning for Children's Fine Motor Development

Observation Dates: ____________________

Observation Summary and Plan	**Child #1:** ____________ **Age:** ____________	**Child #2:** ____________ **Age:** ____________
What fine motor activities are easy for the child?		
What fine motor activities are challenging?		
How can you use what you learned to encourage this child's fine motor development?		

Discuss your observation recordings and plans with your trainer and other teachers who work with these children

III. Encouraging Physical Fitness

In this activity you will learn to:

- Provide indoor and outdoor environments and materials that encourage children's physical fitness
- Plan activities that help children stay fit

Physical fitness is an important goal for all children and adults. Most preschool children are eager to exercise their bodies. They ride tricycles, move their bodies to music, crawl through cardboard boxes, and chase each other around the playground. Unfortunately, as children get older, opportunities for active play become more limited.[2] Although most elementary schools provide some physical education, only one state, Illinois, mandates daily physical education for all children from kindergarten through grade 12. A study by the Harvard School of Public Health found that from age six on, today's children weigh more and have more body fat than did children 20 years ago. This finding reinforces the need to begin physical fitness habits and activities early in life—during the preschool years.

It is important to encourage all children to be physically active.

Parents and teachers should encourage preschoolers to engage in vigorous aerobic play activities—running, playing tag, riding tricycles, walking, climbing, and jumping—that continue for 12 to 15 minutes without stopping. In addition, by providing necessary materials, equipment, and encouragement, adults can help preschoolers develop important skills. These skills can be divided into three categories:

Preschoolers are learning gross motor skills they may use later to play sports.

Object control skills such as kicking a ball, throwing overhand and underhand, catching, striking a ball with a bat or racket, and stopping a ball with the feet.

Locomotor skills such as running, hopping, skipping, balancing, and doing forward and backward somersaults.

Nonlocomotor skills such as pushing, pulling, and lifting.

Each of these skills provides a foundation for the more complex movements used by older children and adults to play games and sports. When children begin to learn these skills in the preschool years they are more likely to be interested in participating in sports and other physical fitness activities during the school-age years. This increases children's chances of becoming "fit" adults, who live longer and healthier lives.

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[2] Cooper, Kenneth. *Kid Fitness: A Complete Shape-Up Program from Birth Through High School* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991).

Outdoor play promotes physical fitness.

In the outdoors, children are free to move and use their bodies in space. Spending all day inside in a large group can be stressful for everyone. Even when the weather is cold and damp, you and the children will benefit from a brief time outdoors. The outdoor environment is a world for children to explore and learn about, as well as a place where they can release pent-up energy.

In most early childhood programs, teachers are not responsible for the selection and placement of large fixed equipment. Typically, the outdoor area is equipped with stationary swings, slides, climbers, a sandbox, a path for wheeled toys, and a storage shed. To stimulate different types of physical activity, you can provide additional materials such as:

soft balls and soft bats
jump ropes
bean bags and targets
rocking boats

tunnels
cardboard boxes
woodworking tools
balance beams

(See Module 3: Learning Environment, for more on outdoor play environments.)

Try these suggestions.

When you take children outdoors, keep the following suggestions in mind to promote physical fitness.

Pay attention to what the children are doing and participate with them. Avoid chatting with teachers from other rooms or participating as the "coach" in large group activities only. Your interactions will support and reinforce children's physical activities.

Participate at the children's level as much as possible. Kneel or crouch, and roll balls or toss bean bags at a speed young children can handle.

Stress cooperation over competition. Encourage children to concentrate on enjoying the things they can do with their bodies, refining the skills they have, and learning new skills. They also can learn to value playing physical games with other individuals who have differing gross motor abilities.

Accept children's real fears of heights, moving fast on wheel toys, and so on. Offer to hold their hands, climb with them, or provide other types of physical assistance when appropriate. Try not to challenge them to go beyond what they think is safe.

Circulate around the outdoor area when not involved in an activity. Invite individual children to play with you, or encourage those who are wandering to play together. Often children become withdrawn outdoors when they think that their involvement will cause them embarrassment.

Move, stretch, or take a short run around the play area. You will probably have lots of company. Getting a little exercise during the day will help you feel refreshed, and lets children know that physical fitness is a part of your life, too.

Plan activities that allow children at different skill levels to feel successful and competent. Children feel frustrated when activities are too difficult, and they get no satisfaction from those that don't provide a challenge.

When children can't go outdoors, provide for indoor physical activities.[3]

It is also important to provide indoor opportunities for physical fitness activities. Children and adults still need to move their bodies even when the weather is extremely inclement. Some suggestions follow.

Hallways are perfect for riding tricycles, rolling balls, tossing bean bags into baskets, playing relay games, building with large blocks, marching to music, and bowling (use plastic milk containers as pins). To avoid overcrowding and confusion, coordinate with other classes to schedule use of the hallway and limit its use to several children at one time.

A classroom loft can provide many opportunities for physical play. Children can climb up and down stairs or a rope ladder, slide down a pole, swing (hang swings on hooks when not in use), or jump off a low platform into a pile of pillows.

Move aside furniture to create space in the room for vigorous activities. Put down mats for tumbling. Lead the children in aerobic exercises and cooperative games using props such as hula hoops, large balls, and parachutes.

Plan music and movement activities every day. Children enjoy music and movement activities such as dancing, marching, and creatively using their bodies in different ways, with and without musical accompaniment. You can plan music and movement activities during choice time, while children transition from one activity to another, and as part of group times. For example, you could ask children to:

- use their bodies to become animals, buildings, or vehicles;
- move from one place to another, crawling slowly like a snail, jumping like a kangaroo, or slithering like a snake;
- stretch high or make themselves big or small; and
- move their heads, arms, hips, and ribs in different ways;

(See Module 7, Creative, for additional suggestions about music and movement.)

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you plan and implement an activity to encourage children's physical fitness. This should be an open-ended activity that offers choices and can be enjoyed by children with differing interests and abilities. Read the example, then plan and implement your activity and respond to the questions.

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[3] Adapted from Derry G. Koralek, *Responding to Children Under Stress* (Washington, DC: Head Start Bureau, 1994), pp. 99-100.

Encouraging Physical Fitness

(Example)

Activity Plan

Activity: *Making an obstacle course for practicing kicking skills*

Materials:

A tire, 2 hula hoops, 5-foot-long board, rope, saw horses, cardboard boxes, safety cones, and 5 large balls

Why are you planning this activity?

Several children have older siblings who play soccer, so there has been a lot of interest in kicking balls around the play yard.

How will the activity encourage children of different interests and abilities to use their physical skills?

The children can work together to design and build the obstacle course. Then, interested children can kick balls through the course. If appropriate, we can encourage children to rearrange the course to create new challenges.

Implement the activity, then complete the following:

Summary

Children: *Alex, Brianna, Drew, Marta, Inez* **Ages:** *4 and 5 years* **Date:** *April 30*

What did you and the children do?

I described the activity at group time. I explained that 5 children could participate today and we could repeat the activity tomorrow if more children are interested. The first 4 children joined me immediately; then Inez joined us after she saw what we were doing.

The children spent about 10 minutes setting up the course. They used the tire, hula hoops, saw horses, and safety cones. Then each child took a ball and kicked it around the course. Some kicked the ball next to the obstacles, others went through or around them. A few balls rolled down the hill.

How did this activity encourage physical fitness?

The children had to lift and carry the obstacles to make the course. They practiced kicking skills. They had to run down and back up the hill when they kicked their balls too hard.

Would you do this activity again? What changes would you make?

I would definitely do this again. The children had fun and used their large muscles. I might provide more safety cones and remove some of the other items that the children didn't use.

Encouraging Physical Fitness

Activity Plan

Activity: ______________________________

Materials:

Why are you planning this activity?

How will the activity encourage children of different interests and abilities to use their physical skills?

Implement the activity, then complete the following.

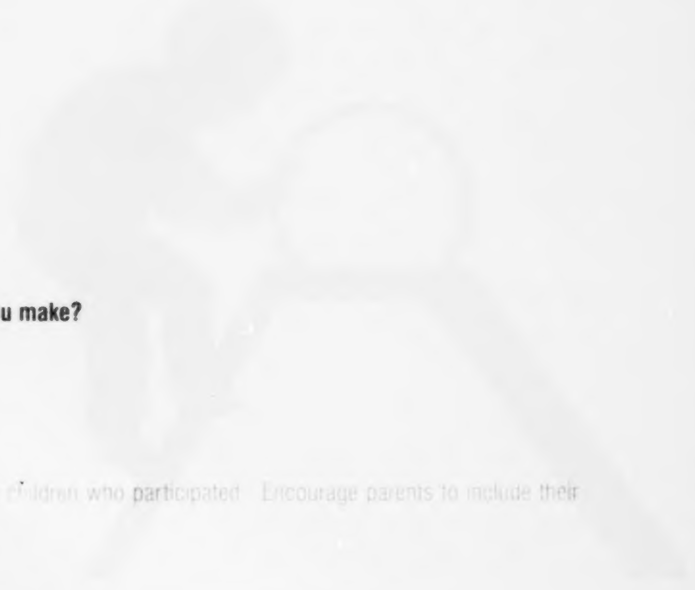
Summary

Children: ____________ **Ages:** ____________ **Date:** ____________

What did you and the children do?

How did this activity encourage physical fitness?

Would you do this activity again? What changes would you make?



Discuss this activity with your trainer and the parents of the children who participated. Encourage parents to include their children in family fitness activities.

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IV. Creating an Environment That Supports Physical Development

In this activity you will learn to:

- Select materials and equipment that help children develop gross motor skills
- Select materials and equipment that help children develop fine motor skills

When teachers know the range of physical skills that children can learn at a given age and stage of development, they can set up an environment that encourages further development of these skills.

The environment should support children's development of physical skills.

An early childhood environment should be a safe place in which children feel confident and reassured as they climb, balance, draw, hop, dance, build, serve themselves, and clean up. A safe environment encourages children to practice skills they have mastered and try out new ones.

The types of materials and equipment you provide should reflect the range of skills, strengths, needs, and interests of the children in your class. Many open-ended materials such as blocks and art supplies are ideal for meeting diverse needs, because they can be used in different ways by children at different skill levels. Older preschool children who have had many opportunities to use their large and small muscles can usually have success with more challenging learning materials and equipment than can three-year-olds and children with limited experiences. It is crucial to provide a wide variety of items that offer children challenges without causing frustration.

Children can use their large and small muscles indoors in every interest area as well as outdoors. The chart that follows lists examples of materials that preschool children use which promote fine and gross motor skills. You can add your own ideas in the right-hand column.

Area	Opportunities for Using Gross and Fine Motor Skills	What We Can Add
Dramatic Play	Lifting dolls, utensils, and pots and pans Pushing and pulling carriages and wagons Setting the table and passing serving bowls. Using zippers, buttons, buckles, and snaps on dress-up clothes Writing an order in a restaurant Holding cups and pretending to drink	
Table Toys	Taking out and putting in puzzle pieces Snapping together Bristle Blocks and Legos Stringing beads Picking up and dropping sorting items (buttons,bottle caps) into trays	
Blocks	Lifting unit blocks and hollow blocks Placing one block on top of another Moving wooden people, cars, and trucks Writing signs to label or protect structures	
Art	Fingerpainting Painting large strokes at the easel Drawing with crayons and markers Pasting and gluing paper, fabric, feathers, and other materials to make collages and assemblages Molding and stretching playdough and clay	
Library	Turning the pages of books Placing headsets on ears Moving felt pieces on a flannel board Pressing buttons on a tape recorder Writing and binding books	
Computer	Pressing keys on keyboard Using a mouse Inserting a disk into the drive Filling the printer with paper	

Area	Opportunities for Using Gross and Fine Motor Skills	What We Can Add
Music, Movement, and Large Muscle (indoors)	Climbing the rungs of an indoor climber Balancing in a rocking boat Crawling through a cardboard box Walking on a balance beam Tossing bean bags in a basket Moving to music Using rhythm instruments	
Sand and water	Pouring from a pitcher Squeezing sponges and turkey basters Directing the spray from a squeeze bottle Feeling the textures of wet and dry sand Rotating wrist or forearm to use eggbeaters or screw on jar lids	
Science and nature	Sprinkling food into a fish bowl Picking up rocks, shells, and other collections Looking at objects through a magnifying glass Carrying a pitcher to water plants Adjusting a microscope	
Woodworking	Holding a nail in one hand and using a hammer with the other Turning the rod on a vise Placing tools on pegboard hooks Making back-and-forth motions with a saw or sandpaper Picking up screws and nails	
Outdoors	Throwing, catching, and kicking balls Swinging from rungs on a climber Crawling through tunnels Pulling a wagon Digging in the sandbox or a garden Pulling weeds	

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you focus on two children in your class. For one child, identify a fine motor skill he or she is working on. For the other child, identify a gross motor skill he or she is working on. Then list some toys, equipment, and/or materials that will promote development of the identified skill for each child. If possible, select children of different ages and abilities. First read the example, then complete the blank form that follows.

Creating an Environment that Supports Physical Development

(Example)

Date: *March 15*

Child/Age	Skill	Materials
Kara, 3 years	*Stringing small beads on strings. Kara can use the pegs and pegboard, but she has a hard time stringing beads.*	*Large beads and laces* *Paper plates and thick yarn for lacing* *Small interconnecting blocks*
Juan, 5 years	*Throwing and catching a small ball. Juan can catch a large ball, but he has a hard time catching smaller ones such as a tennis ball.*	*A large wiffle ball or other ball slightly larger than a tennis ball* *A Nerf ball (standard size)* *Beanbags and a container to throw them into*

Creating an Environment that Supports Physical Development

(Example)

Date: ______________________________

Child/Age	Skill	Materials

Discuss this activity with your colleagues and your trainer. Conduct frequent observations of children's use of fine and gross motor skills so you will know when and how to change the environment in response to changing skills and interests.

V. Promoting Positive Self-Concepts Through Development of Physical Skills

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize how the development of physical skills can support children's socio-emotional growth
- Interact with children in ways that encourage a positive self-concept

Most early childhood teachers have observed first-hand the important role that physical development plays in helping children feel good about themselves. When a child learns to throw a ball, jump a distance, or cut with a pair of scissors, the sense of accomplishment is enormous. The pride that comes from mastering physical skills helps children feel good about themselves. This sense of confidence and competence leads to emotional security and a willingness to risk learning other tasks, social and cognitive, as well as physical. Thus, by addressing children's physical development, you are promoting their growth in all areas and contexts.

Most children will eventually develop physical skills on their own. However, they are more likely to feel proud of their accomplishments if they receive encouragement and support for their efforts. This is especially true if children are slower to develop than their peers or feel pressure from adults. Your encouragement is therefore crucial to ensuring a sense of success. Sometimes, however, the most supportive thing you can do is to give children an uninterrupted opportunity to work on a new skill. Rather than stepping in to help, stand back and allow the child to experience the pleasure of doing something on his or her own.

Adult encouragement can help children feed proud of their physical accomplishments.

Here are some ways that teachers can provide encouragement.

Try these suggestions.

Review or explain how to do an activity correctly before children try it. "John's ready to throw the ball to you. Follow the ball with your eyes, and keep your arms stretched out."

Suggest how a child can overcome an obstacle. "I'll give you a push on the swing. Then you can use your legs to keep going."

Verbally reassure a child who is reluctant or frightened. "I know this can be scary. Would you like me to hold your hand while you climb the ladder?"

Offer praise when a child tries something new. "I watched you go down the slide all by yourself. That was terrific, Renee."

Respect a child's progress, without making comparisons to other children. "You ran a lot faster today than you did last month, Lamont."

When you encourage children, be sure to let them know that you are praising them for their efforts—not how they stack up next to other children or standards. Children need to feel important in their own right, not because they meet someone else's measure of success. As always, it's important to offer sincere and specific praise. If praise comes too often and is vague, it loses its value. On the other hand, sincere and specific praise can make a child feel good and try harder.

It is important to provide materials and activities at appropriate skill levels.

Children acquire new skills when they play and learn in an environment that challenges them to try harder. If materials and activities are too easy, children can become bored and lose interest. At the same time, if they are too far beyond children's skill levels, children can become frustrated and give up.

The key to success is to create an environment and plan activities that interest the children and are appropriate to their capabilities. For example, a teacher might notice that Sharon, age three, loves to tear pieces of paper to make collages but needs practice in refining her small muscle skills. The teacher plans a collage activity where Sharon must use a scissors. However, Sharon does not have the skills needed to cut with a scissors. She becomes frustrated and refuses to participate in art activities at all. While the activity was a good one for developing fine motor skills, it was not appropriate for Sharon at this time, because it was beyond what she could do.

Sharon needs materials that lead to success rather than frustration. Her negative experience with the scissors needs to be offset with positive ones. To help Sharon practice the skills needed for using scissors (eye-hand coordination, finger agility and strength) her teacher might introduce materials she is able to use more successfully: finger puppets, clothespins to clip to the edge of a coffee tin, pegs and a pegboard.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity, you read several descriptions of children developing physical skills. Then you decide what activities you could plan and what you could say to help each child feel successful and competent.

Promoting Positive Self-Concepts Through Development of Physical Skills

What the Child Is Doing	What Activities/Materials You Would Offer This Child	What You Could Say to Encourage the Child
Jason can kick objects forward with ease but is having difficulty kicking objects backward.		
All the children except Eduardo have fun walking on coffee can stilts. Eduardo can't seem to stay up on the "stilts."		
Every time the ball is thrown at Maria, she ducks or runs out of its path.		
Lucy enjoys stringing large beads. One time she tried to make a necklace of smaller beads. She got frustrated and spilled the entire box of beads on the floor.		
Matthew likes to help pour juice for snacks. However, every time he takes a turn at helping, he spills a large amount of juice. Still, he loves to help out.		

Review your responses with your trainer.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or a new one, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for promoting the physical development of preschool children.

Before you go on to the next module, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Gross Motor Development, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned while you were working on this module. Read the sample responses on the completed chart at the end of the module.

- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed them, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 201-203)

Providing Materials, Equipment, and Opportunities for Gross Motor Development

1. **How did the children let Ms. Williams and Ms. Frilles know they were ready for gross motor activities?**
   a. *They tested the classroom rules and limits.*

   b. *They were very noisy during choice time.*

   c. *Mark "moaned" that they couldn't go outside.*

2. **What gross motor activities did Ms. Williams and Ms. Frilles provide?**
   a. *They asked the children to help move the shelves.*

   b. *They encouraged the children to move their bodies inside the rope rings.*

Providing Materials and Opportunities for Fine Motor Development

1. **How did Ms. Kim encourage the children to use their small muscles?**
   a. *She allowed the children to pour their own milk.*

   b. *She told Robert how to do hold the cup so it wouldn't move.*

   c. *She had Robert use a sponge to wipe up his spilled milk.*

   d. *She asked them to think of a way to pick up peas so the peas won't fall off a fork.*

   e. *She allowed them to spear peas with the fork.*

2. **What did Ms. Kim say to encourage the children's efforts?**
   a. *She told Robert why the milk spilled—because it came out too fast.*

   b. *She asked Robert to wipe up the milk instead of making him feel bad about the spill.*

   c. *She told Shannon that her hand and arm muscles were working well.*

   d. *She reassured Robert that he could pour more slowly the next time.*

   e. *She commented that the children had solved the problem.*

Reinforcing and Encouraging Children's Physical Fitness

1. **What outdoor activities encouraged children's physical fitness?**
   - a. *riding tricycles around cones*
   - b. *pulling each other in wagons*
   - c. *crawling through cardboard boxes*
   - d. *kicking a ball*

2. **Why do you think Ms. Thomas suggested an alternative to soccer?**
   - a. *She knows that many five-year-olds are not ready for competitive sports.*
   - b. *She thinks the family fun program will encourage Lindsay and her family to have fun and stay fit together.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Gross Motor Skills

(p. 211)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Gross Motor Skills
They walk easily and can balance themselves on one foot for several seconds at a time.	*Lay a wide strip of tape to the floor so children can practice balancing while walking forwards, sideways, backwards, with arms in front or behind, and over obstacles. Use tape or unit blocks to make a walking course with turns, curves, and obstacles.*
They run, jump, and hop.	*Play noncompetitive games, such as cooperative musical chairs, so children can use their large muscle skills. Arrange the environment so children can jump, hop, and skip around and over objects.*
They move to music, imitate dance movements, and make up creative ways to move.	*Lead activities in which children can move their bodies to music with different rhythms. Offer experiences in which you direct children's movement and some in which children create their own movements.*
They throw balls overhead and catch bounced balls.	*Provide bean bags and balls of various sizes for children to throw and catch. Play catch with children and encourage children to play with each other. Teach older preschoolers simple ball games.*
They climb.	*Allow adequate time for children to use indoor and outdoor climbing equipment. Encourage children who are learning to climb so they feel competent and are not frustrated or fearful.*
They ride tricycles.	*Make sure tricycles are in good repair and the right size. If necessary, let the director know you need repairs or new trikes. Allow beginners to drag their feet on the ground at first—explain and demonstrate pedaling when children are ready. Make sure children know how to stop safely! Offer safety cones and traffic signs children can steer around.*
They use playground equipment such as slides, climbers, and swings.	*Take children outdoors every day for vigorous play and to use outdoor equipment. Be aware of which children need special encouragement because they are afraid.*

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Glossary

Aerobic

Vigorous activities and exercises that involve deep breathing for sustained periods of time.

Eye-hand coordination

The ability to direct finger, hand, and wrist movements to accomplish a fine motor task, such as fitting a peg in a hole or piling blocks.

Fine motor skills

Movements that involve the use of small muscles of the body, hands, and wrists—for example, picking up puzzle pieces or cutting with a pair of scissors.

Fitness

The state of an individual's health that reflects his/her quality of life—includes the individual's level of endurance, strength, flexibility, percentage of body fat, and degree of nutritional balance.

Gross motor skills

Movements that involve the use of large muscles of the body, the entire body, or large parts of the body—for example, running, hopping, or climbing.

Physical development

The gradual gaining of control over large and small muscles.

Sensory awareness

The gaining of information through sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell—for example, smelling spices or turning in the direction of a voice.

Module 5: *Cognitive*

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Overview

Promoting children's cognitive development involves:

- Creating an environment that encourages children to explore and discover
- Interacting with children in ways that help them develop confidence in their ability to think and solve problems
- Providing opportunities for children to construct knowledge about their world

Cognitive development is the process of learning to think and to reason. Children develop thinking skills by actively exploring their world, trying out their ideas, and observing what happens. Teachers promote children's cognitive development most effectively when they base their practices on how children learn best. The field of education has learned a great deal about children's cognitive development from the work of researchers such as Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky.

Piaget taught us that children think differently from adults.

Through his research, Piaget observed that children pass through different stages of thinking as they develop. For example, Piaget observed that young preschoolers think that a tall, thin glass can hold more water than a short, wide one—even when they see identical amounts of water poured into both glasses. At this stage of thinking, children tend to focus on one feature of an object at a time—in this case, the height of the glass and not its width. By about age six or seven, though, children come to understand that the amount of water in both glasses is the same no matter how it looks. This understanding comes when children are old enough to think more abstractly—to think about ideas and concepts in their heads—and when they have had many direct experiences exploring water and other liquids. According to Piaget, young children grow cognitively as they interact with real objects and materials.

Vygotsky explained how adults facilitate and guide children's learning.

Vygotsky's theories show us that children learn best through social interactions with adults and other children; children need adults and "competent peers" to support their beginning learning. Competent peers are children who already know what is being learned. Vygotsky compares this support to the scaffolding placed around new buildings as they are erected. This mental scaffolding provides a framework within which children can use their cognitive skills on their own. According to Vygotsky, adults are facilitators and guides who help children develop their own understandings about the world, rather than people who "give" children knowledge.

Thus, the work of Piaget and Vygotsky shows us that children develop cognitive skills by continually exploring their world and being supported by people who help them make sense of their experiences. You have undoubtedly observed how young children notice all kinds of things and events in their world. They see the smallest caterpillar that you might overlook. And it's not enough for them to just see the caterpillar; they have to touch it, pick it up, examine it closely, even smell it. By using all their senses, young children develop a real understanding of caterpillars. When you say the word, "caterpillar," children learn a label for this object they have explored first hand. On another day, when they see a worm, the same children may say, "Look at the caterpillar!" This is because they have noticed that a worm and a caterpillar have many characteristics in common. Although they are not actually correct, they are applying their new knowledge to a similar situation and striving to understand. We call this "constructing knowledge."

Self-confidence is an important part of cognitive development.

Children's cognitive development is not measured by how much information a child has memorized. While learning concepts and acquiring knowledge is, of course, important during these early years, learning to learn is even more important. To grow cognitively, children need to have the self-confidence and skills to explore, try out ideas, make mistakes, solve problems, and take on new challenges. Helping children develop and use their cognitive skills is an important part of your work.

Preschool children are curious and eager to explore the world around them. As a teacher, you can build on this natural curiosity to guide children's cognitive development. First, you can create an environment that encourages children to explore and make discoveries. Second, you can ask questions and talk with children in ways that help them develop confidence in their own abilities to think and solve problems. Third, you can provide opportunities for children to construct knowledge about their world.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in promoting children's cognitive development. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers to those on the answer sheet at the end of this module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Creating an Environment That Encourages Children to Explore and Discover

Call attention to sensory experiences as children use materials and participate in routines.	"How does the finger paint feel when you spread it on the shiny paper?"
Organize and display toys and materials logically by categories and attributes.	"Angie is putting away all the triangles on the music shelf. Tyrone, can you collect all the zoo animals and put them in the basin with their picture on the front?"
Display materials that encourage children to make discoveries.	"What did you see when you used the magnifying glass to look at the seashell?"
Provide materials such as plastic bottle caps, beans, buttons, and shells that invite children to sort, classify, and order.	"I see you put the bottle caps in two different piles. How did you decide where to put each bottle cap?"
Provide materials that match children's skills and interests and challenge children to extend their learning.	"Marcus and Jedi, here's a scale, a stamp and pad, and a mailbox to use in your post office."
Offer open-ended materials that children with varied skills and interests can use in different ways.	"The children used the pieces of fabric we put in the dramatic play area as tablecloths, flags, and scarves."
Offer materials that encourage children to explore cause and effect and make predictions.	"Leyla, tell me what happened to the sand when you sprayed it with water."

Ms. Thomas overhears two children discussing the marigolds they planted last month. "The orange ones are taller than the yellow ones," says Rion. "No they aren't," says Tracey. "They just look that way." Ms. Thomas listens to the discussion, then gets some string and scissors from the storage shed. She hands them to Rion and says, "Can you use these to figure out who's right?" Rion says, "Yeah. We can measure how far it is from the sidewalk to the top of each marigold." Rion holds the string tight on the ground, while Tracey unrolls it. "Higher, no lower," says Rion. Soon the children realize their approach is not working. Ms. Thomas says, "That was a good idea to use the string as a measuring tool. Is there another way you could measure with the string?" "I know, I know," says Tracey. "We can measure from the top of the soil to the top of the plants." The children try Amy's idea and find out that the orange marigolds are taller—but just a little.

1. **Why did Ms. Thomas give the string and scissors to the children?**

2. **What did the children learn from their experience?**

Interacting with Children in Ways That Help Them Develop Confidence in Their Ability to Think and Solve Problems

Point out children's use of thinking skills.	"You thought of a special way to string these beads. It makes an interesting pattern."
Show children that you accept and respect their work and ideas.	"Thanh, I've never seen a triple-decker cracker sandwich! What a good idea to put different kinds of cream cheese in each layer!"
Comment on children's work in a way that introduces new words and builds on their ideas.	"You used rectangles and squares to make a long block train. Where will the passengers get on and off?"
Ask questions to help children understand how past events relate to what is happening now.	"Remember the last time we made playdough? How did we make it less sticky?"
Answer children's questions and help them find their own answers.	"Nina, you're right, the snow on the window sill isn't as high as it was yesterday. What do you think happened?"
Ask questions that encourage children to think of several possible answers or solutions.	"I'm afraid someone might get hurt on that crowded climber. What could we do to make it safer?"
Ask questions that help children think about cause and effect or make predictions.	"Why do you think our plants look so droopy on Monday mornings?"

Ms. Williams is watching three children building a tall tower in the block area. She can see that if they add any more blocks, the building is likely to fall. She knows that even if it falls, no one is going to get hurt. When the building comes crashing down, Ms. Williams goes quietly into the block area and kneels down near the children. "I see your building fell down," she says calmly. "What do you think happened?" Terry says, "We made the building too tall." Ms. Williams asks, "Do all tall buildings fall down?" "No," says Heather, "this one was too skinny." Ms. Williams then asks, "How could you build a tall building so it won't fall down?" After thinking a minute, Sam responds, "We could make it fatter so it would be stronger." "Why don't you try that," says Ms. Williams, "and see what happens?"

1. **Why did Ms. Williams not interfere with the block builders when she could see their building might fall down?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams encourage the children to think through and solve the problem on their own?**

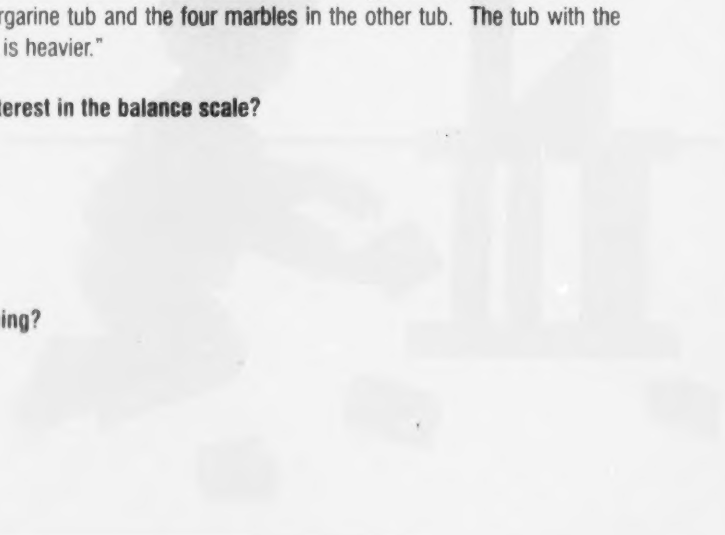
Providing Opportunities for Children to Construct Knowledge About Their World

Set up activities that allow children to test out their ideas.	"Why do you think some things sink to the bottom of the water and others float on the top?"
Plan activities that follow up on books you and the children have read to extend their understanding.	"Today we're going to have a color dance like in the story we read yesterday. Here's a basket full of colored scarves."
Help children apply what they have learned to new situations.	"Last week you made purple by mixing red and blue paint together. What will happen if you mix blue and yellow?"
Extend children's dramatic play by providing new props or making suggestions.	"That was a good idea to use the stuffed animals and health prop box to set up a veterinary office."
Plan activities that allow children to use their senses to explore.	"The nature trail is very quiet, but if you listen carefully, you can hear many different sounds."
Model how to use books to learn new information.	"I don't know what kind of butterfly that is. Let's look it up in our butterfly book."
Help children learn about their community by taking neighborhood walks and inviting guests to visit the program.	"Ms. Petrovich is our children's librarian. Today she's going to tell you a story."

Ms. Richards is sitting with three children at the science table. She has just put out a simple balance scale. "Can you make your hands into a balance scale?" she asks, while demonstrating what she means. "What would happen to your scale if I put one of these blocks in your right hand?" She places a block in each child's right hand and they discuss how it pushes that hand down. "Now, let's see which is heavier, the block or these four marbles." Ms. Richards places four marbles in each child's left hand. The children "weigh" each hand and discuss which feels heavier. There are different opinions. "How could we find out for sure which is heavier?" she asks. "We could use the balance scale," suggests Emily. "Let's try it," says Ms. Richards. Emily places her block in one margarine tub and the four marbles in the other tub. The tub with the block sinks down. "I knew it!" says David. "The block is heavier."

1. **How did Ms. Richards introduce and generate interest in the balance scale?**

2. **What skills and concepts were the children learning?**



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Your Own Experiences with Learning

Learning is a lifelong experience.

People don't stop learning when they leave school; they continue to refine their thinking and reasoning skills. Think of people you know whom you consider good learners and thinkers. People who have confidence in their ability to learn generally have some of the following characteristics:

- They are not afraid to accept a challenge.
- When they confront a problem, they don't give up if they can't resolve it right away. They try to figure out what to do.
- They are curious and interested in learning new things.
- They are creative thinkers—they can look at something and see several possibilities.
- They speak up and say what they think.

We all know different things.

We don't all know the same things, nor do we need to. An auto mechanic knows a lot about the parts of a car, what makes it go, and how to fix it. When there's a problem, the mechanic tries to identify the cause. If you know very little about how a car operates, this doesn't make you less smart. You know other things the mechanic doesn't know. What really matters is whether we have the knowledge and skills we need to function successfully in our own lives.

Many factors affect our ability to learn something new. Most important is whether the new information is useful to us. If we can see a way to use what we are learning, we are likely to be more interested in making the effort to learn. It helps if the new information is related to something we already know about, or know how to do—or to something we've wanted to know for some time.

Learning style affects how we learn best.

Each of us has our own style or way of learning that works best for us. Some of us need to read over directions and think about them for a while. Others prefer to watch someone else demonstrate a task, or need to hear directions explained a couple of times.

As an adult you are aware of what helps you learn a new skill or new idea. Think of a time recently when you were in a learning situation-for instance, learning to swim, taking an adult education course, or going through these modules.

What made it easy for you to learn in that situation?

Many factors can affect our ability to learn.

Some factors that affect our ability to learn relate to the instructor or to the material itself: how the information is presented, how it is organized, and whether it is at an appropriate level—neither too simple nor too complex. Our readiness to learn is also affected by how we feel at the time. If we are tired, distracted, uncomfortable, or unsure of what is expected of us, we are less likely to learn.

This training program is designed to help you learn new concepts and skills and feel good about yourself as a learner. Several strategies make it a positive learning experience:

- The information is organized into short learning activities so you won't be overwhelmed with too much information at once.
- All the learning activities relate to your work so you can apply the infomation easily.
- There are many examples within each module to help you understand the content.
- Answer sheets, a colleague, or your trainer can give you feedback.
- You receive your own set of materials which become an ongoing reference on the job.
- You complete many of the learning activities while caring for children.

As you enhance your skills and knowledge in ways that make you feel confident, you will be able to do the same thing for children. Like you, young children learn best when they are interested in and ready to receive new information. They construct knowledge by trying out new ideas and discovering what works and what doesn't on their own. As you go through these modules, you will try out many ideas and discover for yourself what approaches work best for you and for the children in your care.

When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions of the terms that are used.

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills teachers use to promote children's cognitive development. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Creating an Environment That Encourages Children to Explore and Discover

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Call attention to sensory experiences as children use materials and participate in routines.	☐	☐	☐
2. Organize and display toys and materials logically by categories and attributes.	☐	☐	☐
3. Display materials that encourage children to make discoveries.	☐	☐	☐
4. Provide materials such as plastic bottle caps, beans, buttons, and shells that invite children to sort, classify, and order.	☐	☐	☐
5. Provide materials that match children's skills and interests and challenge children to extend their learning.	☐	☐	☐
6. Offer open-ended materials that children with varied skills and interests can use in different ways.	☐	☐	☐
7. Offer materials that encourage children to explore cause and effect and make predictions.	☐	☐	☐

Interacting with Children in Ways That Help Them Develop Confidence in Their Ability to Think and Solve Problems

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Point out children's use of thinking skills.	☐	☐	☐
9. Show children that you accept and respect their work and ideas.	☐	☐	☐
10. Comment on children's work in a way that introduces new words and builds on their ideas.	☐	☐	☐
11. Ask questions to help children recall understand how past events relate to what is happening now.	☐	☐	☐
12. Answer children's questions and help them find their own answers.	☐	☐	☐
13. Ask questions that encourage children to think of several possible answers or solutions.	☐	☐	☐
14. Ask questions that help children-think about cause and effect or make predictions.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Opportunities for Children to Construct Knowledge About Their World

15. Set up activities that allow children to test out their ideas.	☐	☐	☐
16. Plan activities that follow up on books you and the children have read to extend their understanding.	☐	☐	☐
17. Help children apply what they have learned to new situations.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Opportunities for Children to Construct Knowledge About Their World

(Continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
18. Extend children's dramatic play by providing new props or making suggestions.	☐	☐	☐
19. Plan activities that allow children to use their senses to explore.	☐	☐	☐
20. Model how to use books to learn new information.	☐	☐	☐
21. Help children learn about their community by taking neighborhood walks and inviting guests to visit the program.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you will list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Now begin the learning activities for Module 5, Cognitive.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize how preschool children learn best
- Use what you know about preschool children to promote learning

At one time people believed a child's mind was like an empty slate and that it was the role of adults to fill the slate with knowledge. This led to the idea that teaching meant deciding what children should know, telling them the information, and having them memorize and practice until they learned it.

We now know that children are active participants in the learning process. They are like detectives, eagerly trying to make sense of experiences. The more actively they go about learning, the more their brains work to try to understand new experiences. And the more they use their brain power, the more capable children become as learners.

Children "construct" knowledge about their world.

This idea that learning takes place inside the child—rather than something that is poured into the child—is called "constructivism." It means that children construct knowledge—they apply what they already know to what they observe and try to explain and make sense of new experiences. By actively exploring using all their senses—seeing, touching, tasting, hearing, smelling—children test out their ideas and make discoveries. In so doing, they re-examine their previous ideas. Sometimes their experiences reinforce what they already know, and sometimes they change their ideas. In the process, children are building a clearer and (usually) more accurate understanding of their world and how things work.

> Four-year-old Jason watches Taylor at the sand table scooping up sand and pouring it to make a sand wheel spin around. Later that day, while playing at the sand table, he gets the same scoop and dumps the sand into the top of the sand wheel but nothing happens. He tries more sand but it just piles up in the opening and the wheel doesn't move. Then he notices that the sand he scooped up is wet and sticks together. He dumps the wet sand out, scoops up some dry sand, and grins as the wheel begins to spin.

Jason observed how another child was able to make the sand wheel turn. He remembered what he had seen when he approached the sand table and applied what he learned. When it didn't work, he had to figure out what was wrong and try another approach. His first idea—adding more sand—didn't work. His next idea—trying dry sand—did work. Thus, Jason constructed his own understanding of how to make the sand wheel work. Because he figured it out himself, he will be more likely to remember what he learned. Even more importantly, he is learning how to be a learner.

Preschool children ask lots of questions.

Children can ask endless questions to learn about the world around them. They can exhaust even the most patient adult!

They ask **why** questions to learn the purpose of things.

- "Why does the alarm clock go off in the morning?"
- "Why does the car need gas?"

They ask **what** questions to learn the names of things.

- "What is the thing that covers the light bulb?"
- "What is that thing that's flying around?"

They ask **how** questions to understand processes and relationships.

- "How does the water get hard into ice cubes?"
- "How did he get home when the bus broke down?"

Answering the many questions young children ask can feel like a full-time job. Sometimes a simple answer is all that is required: "That's a butterfly." Other times you can use the question to help a child think: "Let's try to think of all the ways he could have gotten home when the bus broke down."

Children learn by interacting with others.

Children teach each other every day. Watch two or more children playing with water, building with blocks, finger painting, or engaging in dramatic play. They may talk about what they are doing, share information, give each other advice, and correct one another. All learning doesn't come from the teacher.

Children need many opportunities to work and play with others. They don't learn by sitting and listening. They learn by observing others, hearing what others have to say, and putting their own ideas into words.

Play engages children in active learning.

Young children learn through play. By recreating experiences—with blocks, paints, clay, boxes—and re-enacting what they have experienced—through dramatic play—children gain a deeper understanding and clarify their ideas.

Sara Smilansky[1] identified four different kinds of play. Each type of play contributes to children's development and learning.

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[1] Smilansky, Sara and Leah Sheatya. *Facilitating Play: A Medium for Promoting Cognitive, Socio-Emotional and Academic Development in Young Children* (Gaithersburg, MD: Psychosocial and Educational Publications, 1990).

Functional play occurs when children actively explore and examine the physical properties of materials and objects. By handling, experimenting, observing, listening, and smelling, children learn about their environment.

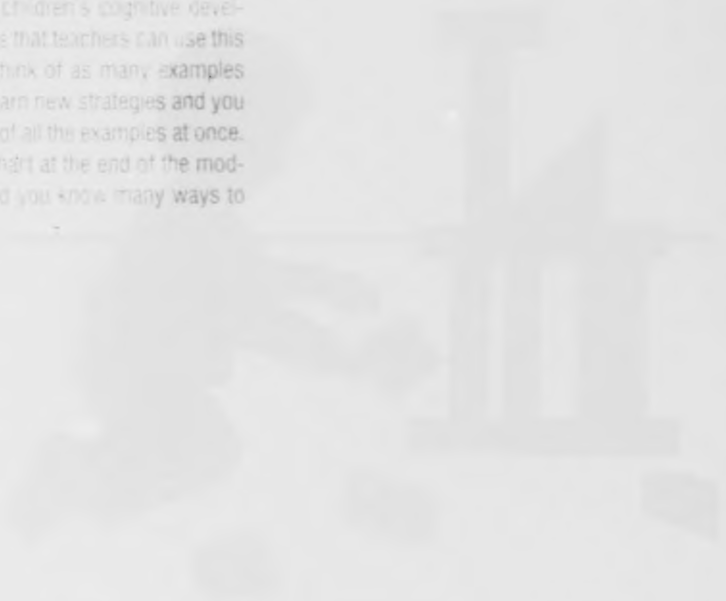
Constructive play involves using materials to create a representation of something. Children might build a farm with blocks, paint a picture of a dog, or make a cardboard box into a ship. This type of play requires children to recall what they know and recreate it.

Socio-dramatic play entails pretending to be someone else and making believe about a situation. Children re-enact experiences they have had, observed, or imagined. Socio-dramatic play is a cognitive task that requires children to remember the actions of the person or thing they are playing, select details about an event to replay, use real or imaginary props, and display appropriate words and gestures. Socio-dramatic play teaches children to think abstractly. By role playing, they come to understand their experiences on a much deeper level.

Games with rules is the fourth type of play. Board games such as Lotto or more active games like "Red Light, Green Light" require children to learn the rules and follow them. This type of play helps children learn to concentrate, understand rules, and control their behavior to conform to the rules of the game.

Teachers promote children's cognitive development by basing their practices on an understanding of how children learn. They provide many opportunities for children to actively explore, seek answers to their questions, and recreate what they have experienced.

The chart on the next two pages identifies some typical behaviors of preschool children. Included are behaviors relevant to promoting children's cognitive development. The right-hand column asks you to identify ways that teachers can use this information to promote cognitive development. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module, you will learn new strategies and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at once. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of the module. By the time you complete this module, you will find you know many ways to promote children's cognitive development.



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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Cognitive Development
They learn by using all their senses—smell, taste, touch, sight, and sound.	*Make a tape of familiar sounds and ask children to guess what each sound is. Offer various textured items for collage making. Talk about how foods smell and taste. Have children identify mystery objects in a bag by touch.*
They are interested in cause and effect—what makes things happen.	
They have rapidly expanding vocabularies—they can name many things and explain their ideas.	
They are curious and want to explore many things.	
They learn by using their imaginations in dramatic play and other activities.	
They believe there is a purpose for everything and ask many questions: "Why?" "How?" "What?"	

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Cognitive Development
They construct knowledge by exploring and making connections between new experiences and what they know from past experiences.	
They are developing an understanding of numerical concepts but need many experiences with real objects.	
They learn to match, classify, and identify shapes and colors by playing with toys and objects.	
They have many ideas and like to gather information about the world.	
They are beginning to understand that pictures, letters, words, and numbers represent real objects and ideas.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add more examples of how teachers can promote children's cognitive development.

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II. Understanding How Preschool Children Think

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize how children think and seek to make sense of their experiences
- Respond to children in ways that promote thinking and understanding

As an adult, you can read and take meaning from the words on this page because you understand the concepts they represent. When you add this new information to what you already know, you deepen your understanding. You can also learn by listening to a speaker or watching a video about a subject of interest to you.

Preschool children think and learn differently from adults.

Preschool children learn differently from adults. Written words hold little or no meaning for most preschoolers. They are beginning to recognize some letters and words but they are certainly not ready to learn from printed pages. Nor do young children learn best by sitting and listening. They learn best by doing. They have to explore, try out their ideas, and see for themselves what happens. They construct knowledge from their own experiences.

You may have heard people say that young children have their own ways of thinking. As a teacher working with children every day, you have probably enjoyed the "funny" things they sometimes say. Knowing why children say and do these "funny" things will help you understand how preschool children think. It will also help you appreciate how hard they are working to understand the world around them.

Preschool children take words literally.

Most young children don't realize that the same word can have different meanings, depending on how it is used. Because preschool children are still learning these multiple meanings, they can get confused.

- A three-year-old told her mother: "We went on a walk at school today. We were looking for signs of winter, but all I saw was one STOP sign."
- A teacher put on a tape and told the children to "move to the music," meaning "move your bodies as the music makes you feel." The children got up and moved over to the tape player.

These children took the words they heard very literally. They had a different understanding of the adults' words than was intended, and they acted on what they thought was meant. While adults find such mistakes amusing, it is important to respond in ways that respect children's efforts to learn. "Sign is a word with several meanings. I think your teacher meant . . ." "You did just what I asked you to do. Now, try listening to the music and see how it makes you want to move your arms and legs and bodies."

Preschool children generalize from one experience.

Preschool children generalize—they make a connection between what they observe and what they have experienced in the past. Sometimes they put ideas together that are not related.

- "Today we are having fish for lunch because the teacher is late. Whenever the teacher is late, we have fish."
- A four-year-old noticed that a friend didn't want ice cream for dessert. Later that night, the friend got sick. The next day, when offered ice cream, the child said, "Yes, because if I don't have ice cream, I'll get sick too."

Even though these children were not correct in their conclusions, they were making connections to try to understand and predict events in their lives.

Preschool children judge things by how they look.

If something looks bigger, young children believe it must be bigger. If they were able to think logically, they would see that the amount can stay the same, no matter how it looks. Here are two examples:

- If you put some sand in a low, long tray and then let a child watch you put the same amount of sand into a flower pot, he or she might say there is more sand in the pot than in the tray because the sand seems "deeper."
- Young children often break up their crackers at snack time because to them, lots of small pieces seem like more than one large piece.

Preschool children are egocentric in their thinking.

Young children also tend to be egocentric thinkers—they believe that what is in their mind is also in yours. This doesn't mean they are selfish or only focused on themselves. It means that cognitively, they have trouble understanding that each person is different and has different thoughts and ideas.

- A three-year-old with a toothache was asked if it hurt. "Yes," he replied, "Can't you feel it?"
- "Don't you know that?" children will ask in surprise, as if everyone should know what they know!

Listening to what children say is an excellent way to learn how they think and attempt to make sense of their world. Children teach us a lot about what they understand and what they are ready to learn.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you observe and listen to the children in your group over a one-week period. Look for examples of how they are trying to make sense of the world. Try to find examples of the following: taking words literally; cause-and-effect thinking; judging things by how they look; and egocentric thinking. First read the example that follows. Then use the chart on the following page to record your observations.

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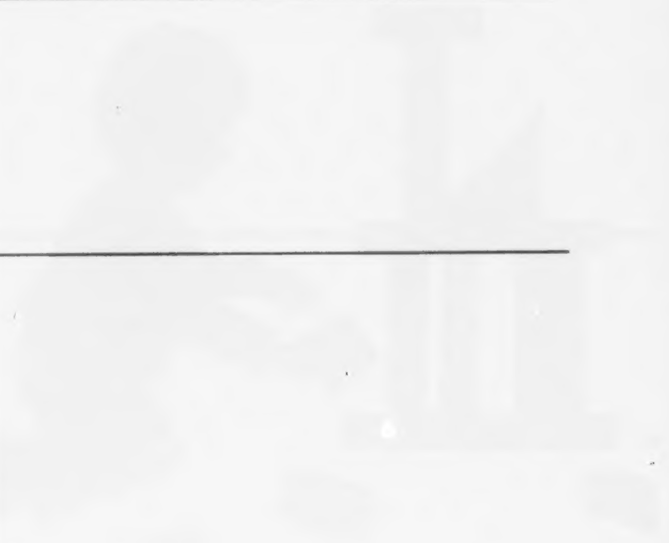
Learning About Children's Thinking

(Example)

What the Child Said or Did	**What You Learned**
Tim was sure his piece of clay was bigger than Vanessa's because his was taller and hers was flatter. (They were the same.)	*Tim judges the quantity of clay by how it looks.*
When I told Delores she had "sharp eyes," she put her hands to her eyes and said, "They're not sharp."	*Dolores takes words literally. She is a concrete thinker.*
After a storm, Susan announced, "Thunder makes the rain."	*This is cause-and-effect thinking. Susan linked two events and believes that one caused the other.*

Learning About Children's Thinking

What the Child Said or Did	**What You Learned**



When you have at least 5 examples, discuss your observations with your trainer.

III. Encouraging Children to Explore and Discover

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize how children learn from their environment
- Ask questions that encourage children to explore and make discoveries

There is an endless amount of information that preschool children can learn. As important as what they learn, however, is whether they are learning how to learn. Children who are encouraged to explore and make discoveries on their own develop confidence in themselves as learners.

Creating an Interesting Environment

The indoor and outdoor environment is the setting you can use to help children develop cognitive skills. Many of the concepts and relationships you want children to learn are already present in the environment.

Many concepts are present in the environment.

Concepts such as colors, shapes, and sizes are evident in materials such as table toys, paints, and blocks. Relationships and principles of science and math, such as the graded sizes of unit blocks, what plants need to grow, and how many cups of juice are contained in a pitcher can be found or demonstrated in the environment. Children learn about cause and effect when they mix colors at the easel, add yeast to bread dough, and build a block tower that tumbles to the floor.

There are many fine materials you can purchase for your room. But don't overlook the wonderful "junk" you and children's parents can collect and use to promote cognitive development. Some examples of materials you can provide are given below.

Collections are found objects that invite children to sort, organize, and classify:

- keys
- buttons
- seeds and pits
- beans
- rocks
- shells
- leaves
- plastic bottle caps

Tools for exploring invite children to closely examine objects. When placed with the objects, children are more likely to use tools in their investigations. They may include the following:

- magnifying glasses near collections of sand, rocks, and leaves
- magnets and objects to test
- screwdrivers and an old clock to take apart
- a balance scale and objects to weigh
- measuring tools: rulers, cups, spoons, tapes, yardsticks

Table toys are ideal for encouraging children to explore and use their growing thinking skills. Every classroom should have manipulative materials such as the following:

- attribute blocks or beads
- parquetry blocks
- pegboards and pegs
- puzzles
- Cuisenaire rods
- matching games
- seriation games and toys (e.g., nesting cups, sound canisters, texture games, color chips)
- colored cubes
- shape-sorting boxes
- beads for stringing

The more varied the environment, the more opportunities children have to apply thinking skills as they explore and discover.

Skills Children Use to Explore and Discover

Children use a variety of skills to explore their world and make discoveries. As they strive to make sense of their experiences, children construct knowledge.

Children use their senses to identify characteristics of things around them.

By using all their senses—touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting—preschool children can identify the characteristics of things around them and seek answer to their own questions. Adults can help children learn the words used to describe different characteristics: hard/soft, red/green, loud/quiet, sour/sweet. You can encourage children to notice the characteristics of materials by asking questions such as the following:

- "How does the sandpaper feel? How does the aluminum foil feel?"
- "When you sniff the bottle of vanilla, what does it remind you of?"
- "What did you hear when you placed the shell against your ear?"

Children can identify similarities and differences.

Being able to identify how things are the same and how they are different is a skill that will help children when they learn to read. For example, to understand the symbols used in reading, children must be able to tell the differences between *q* and *p*, *d* and *b*. Before they can do this, they need many opportunities to compare, to match, and to identify how objects are the same and how they are different. Here are some questions you can ask to guide children in identifying similarities and differences:

- "Can you find another block that looks like this one?"
- "How are these two buttons the same? How are they different?"
- "Which of these fruits have rough skins? Which have smooth ones?"

Preschool children are naturally quite interested in comparing themselves to others: how their hair is different, whether they have the same shoes. Encourage children to compare in a friendly, nonjudgmental way so that they learn to appreciate similarities and differences without forming prejudices. Recognizing how people are alike and different is an important step in learning to appreciate and value each other.

Children use classification skills to make sense of the world.

The ability to sort and classify helps children to make sense of the world. They sort objects, people, events, and ideas into groups according to a single trait they have in common. When a three-year-old says to his teacher, "You can't be a Mommy, you're a teacher," he is classifying. He has put this woman in a group of people called "teachers," and he thinks she can't also be a mother because that's another group. This is because preschool children tend to focus on only one trait at a time. Questions such as the following encourage children to use classifying skills:

- "What different groups could we make with these bottle caps?"
- "You sorted the beads by color. What other groups can you make?"
- "How are all the shapes in this group alike?"

Sequencing helps children understand number concepts.

Sequencing is the ability to put things in a certain order. A time sequence would be first, next, last; a sequence of sizes would be small, medium, and large. There can be sequences in sounds from loudest to quietest, and there can be sequences in color shades from darkest to lightest.

The ability to identify and order sequences is important for an understanding of number concepts. Children need to be able to count in order. You may have heard a child count proudly, "1, 2, 7, 5, 8, 9, 10." In addition to counting in the correct order, children need to understand that each number stands for a quantity of things. Five has real meaning only if a child understands that a group of five objects has one more than four and one less than six. Children need real-life opportunities to practice putting things in order and counting in sequence .

Here are some questions you can ask to help children develop sequencing skills:

- "What happened first in the story? Then what happened? What happened last?"
- "You made a pattern with your beads—red, yellow, blue, red, yellow, blue, and red again. What color bead will you string next to repeat this pattern?"
- "You made a long worm with the playdough. Can you make another one bigger than this one? Now can you make one that is smaller?"

Understanding cause and effect leads to predicting outcomes.

Preschool children seem to be constantly trying to figure out why things happen the way they do. For example, a five-year-old child noticed that the water level in the fish tank had gone down. He said to his teacher, "Look, the fish are drinking the water!" Rather than correcting the child or offering an explanation of evaporation, the teacher asked questions and suggested a way for the child to find out for himself what really caused the water to go down.

- "What makes you think the fish are drinking the water?"
- "You mean if we put out a bowl of water without any fish, the water wouldn't get lower? Let's try it and see what happens."

The children in this class soon discovered that even without fish the water level got lower. The teacher then planned some activities so children could learn more about the concept of evaporation, such as painting with water on a chalkboard and taking a walk after a rain shower when the sun was out.

Once children begin to grasp that things in their environment happen in certain way, they start making predictions—what might happen if . . . or what might happen next if . . . . They can apply what they have learned about cause and effect to a new situation.

The Value of Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions are ones that have many possible answers. Closed questions have only one right answer. For example, if you ask the children, "What kinds of food does our guinea pig like?"—an open-ended question—you will get a variety of responses. If you ask, "Does our guinea pig eat lettuce?"—a closed question—the children will answer either yes or no. They will not have to stretch their thinking to recall everything they know about the topic in order to respond.

Open-ended questions help children build on what they already know. Because there are many possible responses, these types of questions encourage thinking and imagination. With practice, teachers can become skilled at asking children questions that require them to do the following:

- Recall a past event: "What happened last time when . . .?"
- Explore cause and effect: "Why do you think . . .?"
- Make a prediction: "What do you think will happen when you . . .?"
- Think of several possibilities: "What other ways can you . . .?"

The more you practice asking open-ended questions, the more natural it will become for you.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you observe the children as they work and play indoors and outdoors and note examples of how they are using thinking skills. Next, record the open-ended questions you asked to extend their thinking. Review the example that follows, then conduct your observations and complete the blank chart.

Promoting Children's Thinking

(Example)

Thinking Skill	Interest Area	What the Children Did	What You Said to Promote Thinking and Learning
Identifying characteristics of things around them	*Science table*	*Emilio picked up and examined shells in a collection we put out.*	*"How does that shell feel?" "Which one is your favorite?" "What do you like about it?"*
Identifying similarities and differences	*Table toys*	*Kendra took out a Lotto game and spread out all the small cards of zoo and farm animals. She picked up a card with a zebra and matched it to a horse.*	*"How are these two animals the same?" "Can you see any ways in which they are different?" "Can you find another picture of an animal like the first one?"*
Classifying	*Dramatic play*	*Three children reorganized the dress-up items. They put all the clothes in one pile and all the accessories in another.*	*"How did you decide what to put in each pile?"*
Sequencing	*Outdoors*	*Deana and Jerome collected leaves from the playground. They spread them out on a table by size.*	*"You certainly found all sorts of leaves today. Some are big and some are little. How else could you organize your leaf collection?"*
Understanding cause and effect	*Blocks*	*Laeta built a road with a ramp for her car. She made the ramp so steep that the car went down too fast and fell off the road. She grew frustrated.*	*"Looks like that car is going too fast. What could you do to make it go slower?" When she couldn't think of an idea, I said, "What do you think would happen if this block were lower?"*

Promoting Children's Thinking

Thinking Skill	**Interest Area**	**What the Children Did**	**What You Said to Promote Thinking and Learning**
Identifying characteristics of things around them			
Identifying similarities and differences			
Classifying			
Sequencing			
Understanding cause and effect			

Discuss your observations and questions with your trainer.

IV. Planning Experiences with Sand and Water

In this activity you will learn to:

- Encourage children to construct their own knowledge exploring sand and water
- Introduce a variety of props and suggest experiments that encourage children to learn about the properties of sand and water

Most children are naturally drawn to sand and water play. These activities let children be messy in a world that usually demands neatness and order. Think back to your own childhood. Can you remember how much fun it was to blow bubbles through a straw or bury your feet in cool, wet sand? These experiences were enjoyable and provided opportunities for learning. Sand and water play invite children to explore, experiment, and use their creativity. Children find these materials pleasing to look at and touch. For children, playing with sand and water can be a soothing and relaxing experience, or a challenging and exciting one.

Sand and water play encourage children to experiment and make discoveries.

As discussed throughout this module, preschool children like to experiment. They want to figure out what happens when sand gets wet or when they add food coloring to water. There are many ways to pour sand and water; many things to observe. Most importantly, there are no right or wrong ways to play with sand or water. While playing with these media, children can wonder and seek answers to their questions. They make many discoveries and construct knowledge about math and science, including concepts such as the following:

- When you add things to sand and water the properties may change.
- Sand and water look different when viewed through a magnifying glass or clear cup.
- Water changes when it freezes.
- Water evaporates and seems to disappear.
- Water changes other things (it makes sand soggy).
- Water is absorbed by different materials (blotters, cork, Styrofoam, paper towels) in different ways.
- Some objects float in water and others sink.
- You can see reflections and ripples in water.

- Water levels rise and fall.
- Some things dissolve in water (salt, food coloring) and others don't.
- Sand has a distinct texture (it can be fine or coarse, dry or wet).
- Containers of different shapes and sizes hold different amounts of sand and water.

For children to make the kinds of discoveries just described, you will need to offer a variety of props, many of which you can collect or ask parents to donate. Many of the props listed below can be used for both water and sand play.

Offer a variety of props to expand sand and water play experiences.

Props for Sand Play

Buckets and shovels
Cookie cutters
Funnels
Ladles
Measuring cups and spoons
Pebbles and rocks
Rake
Rubber animals and people
Seeds
Sifter
Straws
Toy cars/dump trucks
Whisk broom
Colander
Feathers
Gelatin molds
Magnifying glass
Muffin tin
Plastic dishes (regular and
    doll-sized)
Rolling pin
Seashells
Sieve
Sticks
String

Props for Water Play

Bubble-blowing materials
    (straws, soap flakes, glycerin)
Buckets
Corks
Food coloring/vegetable dye
Ladles
Measuring cups and spoons
Plastic or rubber bottles (with
    and without holes punched in them)
Soap (bar, liquid, flakes)
Whisks
Sponges
Squeeze bottles
Egg beater
Eye dropper
Funnels
Paintbrushes
Scale
Scoops
Strainer
Siphon

It's best to begin with just a few basic props. Then, observe children's play to see when new props are needed. For example, if you see children experimenting with different ways to fill a bottle, you might introduce a funnel.

Planned sand and water play experiences can lead children to make their own discoveries.

After children have had many opportunities to experiment with sand and water, you can plan experiences that encourage them to discover new skills and concepts on their own. Some examples follow.

- Present materials to children sequentially; for example, first dry sand and then wet, or first clear water and later colored or soapy water.
- Introduce different surfaces onto which children can pour water, such as wax paper, a blotter, a sponge, or plastic.
- Provide objects children can use to conduct sink or float experiments.
- Make a series of plastic containers with holes punched in them, so that children can see how long it takes for the different containers to empty.
- Offer materials that are proportional, such as measuring cups or nesting cups.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you plan and implement an activity to promote children's learning through sand or water play. After you write your plan, introduce the activity to the children and record what happens. Review the example on the next page before you begin.

Sand or Water Activity Plan

(Example)

Setting: *Indoors at the water table during choice time* **Date:** *November 9*

Purpose of activity:

To challenge children to construct knowledge about what makes some objects sink and others float in water.

Materials needed:

Water table with two inches of water. A box with objects: corks, piece of wood, plastic bottle with cap, a leaf, acorn, paper clips, a stone, modeling clay, chalk, wood and metal toys, plastic spoons, peach pits, sponges. (I will encourage children to find other objects in the room.) Two trays with illustrated signs: "Sinks" and "Floats."

How you introduced the activity:

At group time I asked the children: "What would happen if you put a stone in water?" We talked about things that float and things that sink. I told them they could experiment with the objects in the box and see what they could find out for themselves.

What happened?

Theresa, Paul, and Miguel went to the water table and began testing the items in the box. I explained the purpose of the trays. I challenged them to guess whether an object would sink or float before they tested it. They began looking around the room for other objects to try. During the morning, Sammy, LaShon, Toby, Tisha, and Tyrone joined the activity. I asked them what they noticed about the objects on each tray.

How did the activity promote cognitive development?

Children were making their own discoveries. They were learning to predict and getting better at guessing correctly. They were identifying different characteristics of objects that sink and float.

Would you do this activity again? If so, describe how you might change it.

Yes, it worked well. The next thing I will do is to suggest to children that some shapes of modeling clay will float and others sink. I will challenge them to make different shapes, test them out, and put the ones that sink on one tray, and the ones that float on another. Then we will talk at group time about what they discovered.

Sand or Water Activity Plan

Setting: ______________________________ **Date:** __________

Purpose of activity:

Materials needed:

How you introduced the activity:

What happened?

How did the activity promote cognitive development?

Would you do this activity again? If so, describe how you might change it.

Discuss this learning activity with your trainer.

V. Helping Children Develop Problem-Solving Skills

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize why problem-solving is an important cognitive skill
- Help children to solve problems on their own

Problem-solving involves thinking of and trying out solutions to problems.

Problems are part of life. Every day children are confronted with problems that require solutions:

- The fingerpaint is too watery; it keeps covering up my design. What can I do?
- My block building keeps falling, but I want it to be tall like a skyscraper. How can I make it stronger?
- I want to play shoe store too. How can I join the group?

Teachers can help children solve problems themselves.

Because children get frustrated easily, it's tempting for adults to want to solve the problem quickly by offering a solution. Yet a quick solution from an adult doesn't teach children how to solve problems on their own. Learning how to solve problems is an important skill that will benefit children now and throughout their lives. Children who begin to see themselves as problem-solvers are more likely to tackle difficult problems when they get older. They will probably be successful in school, because they have confidence in their own abilities.

Teachers can encourage children to develop problem-solving skills by asking the kinds of questions that challenge children to think of their own solutions. The following situation shows how one teacher, Ms. Williams, used a series of open-ended questions to help Joey solve his own problem.[2]

> Joey was playing with some cars on the floor when one of them rolled under the shelf. "Oh, no," said Joey as he heard it bang against the wall. "Ms. Williams," he said, "my car's under the shelf!" Ms. Williams came over to Joey. "Well, how can you get it out?" He stretched his arm under the shelf as far as it could go, but he couldn't feel the car. "You try," he said. Ms. Williams got down and felt around under the shelf. "You had a good idea, but I guess my arm isn't long enough either. Now what?" Joey had another idea. He would try with his foot. When his leg wouldn't fit in the space under the shelf, he tried the other leg, then gave the shelf an angry kick. "This is a frustrating

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[2] Adapted from Bess-Gene Holt et al., *Getting Involved: Your Child and Problem-Solving* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 3.

> problem, isn't it? But kicking the shelf won't help," Ms. Williams said. "Think about why it didn't work." Joey said, "My leg is too big." Ms. Williams smiled. "Yes, it is. So we know my leg won't work! What could we use that would fit?" Joey thought for a minute and said, "Hey, a stick." "Good idea, Joey." She went to the closet and came back with a broom. Joey poked the broom handle under the shelf and out rolled the car.

Together, Joey and Ms. Williams solved the problem. The next time his car or another toy goes under a piece of furniture, Joey will know that he can use a stick to get it out. He also learned that he is capable of solving his own problems.

Teachers can create an environment that encourages problem-solving.

One of the best ways for you to teach problem-solving is to create a classroom environment that values this skill. When a problem arises, let children know that almost all problems have solutions. Allow time for children to seek their own solutions with your support and guidance. Your attitude towards problems is very important. Here are some suggestions for encouraging problem-solving in your classroom.

Be patient. Children may need many opportunities to try and try again. You can help them by saying "I can see how hard you are trying," or by asking questions that may prompt a solution that will work. When Ms. Williams asked Joey, "What could we use that would fit?" she helped him try again rather than rushing in too quickly with an answer.

Accept and respect children's responses. Keep in mind that children think in different ways than adults do. They are more likely to continue to solve problems when they feel that all their ideas are accepted and valued.

Allow time for children to think. Young children may have trouble putting their thoughts into words. It may take some time for them to collect their thoughts and express their ideas. If adults are impatient, children will stop trying.

Offer help a little at a time. When the first solution to a problem doesn't work, help the child learn from the experience and think of other ideas. Observing what happens can help them think of a new solution. Mistakes are not failures; they are part of learning to solve problems.

Respond to children's questions by asking questions that stimulate thinking. "That's an interesting question. How could we find out how long the snowball will last indoors?"

Encourage multiple solutions. This will keep children thinking about new possibilities and options. "That was a good idea. Can you think of any other solutions that would work?"

Model problem-solving. For example, when repairing a wheel on a wagon, talk to children about what you are doing. "Now I see what happened. See how this wheel has a round washer and the broken one doesn't? It looks like all this wheel needs is a new washer." Children will learn that problem-solving is a normal part of daily living.

Teachers can involve children in resolving classroom problems.

In addition to setting a tone that encourages problem-solving, you can teach children how to resolve problems by following specific steps. Often problems arise that affect the whole class. Involving children in discussing the problem, suggesting solutions, and deciding on a plan teaches children that it's possible to solve problems together. Here are the steps for problem-solving with a small group or with the whole class.

Discuss the situation. Present the problem in clear language and without making a judgment about what you think or what you feel is right. Invite children to give their ideas about the situation. Restate what each child says to clarify and make sure all ideas are validated. "So, you think that . . . ."

Generate possible solutions. The next step is to invite children to think of possible solutions. It's important to let children know that there is no one right answer; many solutions might work. Encourage everyone to contribute: "Does anyone have an idea?" You might offer to write down all the ideas on a chart so the group can discuss each one. Ask children to explain their ideas if they are not clear: "Can you say more about that?"

Make a plan. Review the list of solutions and ask children to think about which one they would like to try. Describe how it would work and make sure everyone has the same understanding. "OK, here's what I think we decided. See if you agree."

Implement the plan. The next step is to put the agreed upon solution into effect. Let children know that every solution to a problem doesn't always work. Explain that everyone will try out the plan and observe what happens. Agree on a time to come back and review the situation.

Assess the results. Evaluation is an important last step. Even in situations when it's obvious that a solution is working, it's a good idea to help children reflect on why it worked. Sometimes children are impatient and want to throw out an idea if it doesn't work out immediately. Encourage them to modify the idea and try again before abandoning the idea altogether.

The ability to solve problems, to think of a variety of solutions instead of giving up, is an important life skill. Teachers who are good problem-solvers themselves can inspire children to learn and practice this skill.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you lead a group of children in solving a problem. First identify the problem. Using the steps outlined above, discuss the problem, help children generate solutions, and agree on a plan. Begin by reviewing the example that follows.

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Helping Children Learn to Solve Problems

(Example)[3]

Children Involved: *The whole class* **Date:** *October 11*

Identify the problem:

Superhero play is dominating the choice time. Several children take over the dramatic play area and the play often gets out of hand. Someone always ends up hurt. Also, it's having a negative impact on the classroom atmosphere and on children's work in other areas.

How did you discuss the situation with the children?

I talked about the problem at group time. I said, "I've been thinking about a problem and I need your help in solving it. Lately, I've been noticing a lot of Power Ranger play and it's worrying me. Someone is always getting hurt, and we've talked about how we want our classroom to be safe for everyone. I'm wondering what all of you think."

I invited the children to tell me their ideas. Tonya said, "They hit too much." Kevin said, "They have to hit to get the bad ones." Jerome said, "I hate it when everyone yells." Whatever anyone said, I restated it to validate the idea. For example, to Jerome I said, "It hurts your ears when there is so much noise." The children had a lot to say on the topic!

How did you lead the children to generate possible solutions?

I asked, "Since Power Rangers are strong, what other ways could they show they are powerful without hitting? Does anyone have an idea?" I listed the children's ideas which included things like getting people to the hospital, fixing things, making sure people don't litter, taking bad guys to jail.

How did you help the children make a plan?

I read back the list and asked the children which ones they wanted to try out. They decided tomorrow they would be "Power Fixers" in charge of anything that went wrong, including taking people to jail to be "fixed." They wanted me to keep a list of all the fixing they did.

After implementing the plan, how did you help the children assess the results?

At a meeting two days later, the children agreed that it was not as noisy in the room and no one had gotten hurt. Jerry, Michael, and Tyrone who especially like to play Power Rangers said they needed to be loud sometimes. Stacey suggested they do that outside on the playground. That was agreeable to the boys.

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[3] Ideas from this example are drawn from Diane E. Levin, *Teaching Young Children in Violent Times: Building a Peaceable Classroom* (Cambridge, MA: Educators for Social Responsibility, 1994).

Helping Children Learn to Solve Problems

Children Involved: ________________________________ **Date:** __________

Identify the problem:

How did you discuss the situation with the children?

How did you lead the children to generate possible solutions?

How did you help the children make a plan?

After implementing the plan, how did you help the children assess the results?

Discuss this activity with your trainer.

VI. Engaging Children in Long-Term Studies

In this activity you will learn to:

- Identify appropriate topics that children can explore over a period of time
- Develop a plan for engaging children in a long-term study

In this module we have discussed how children learn from their environment. In each of the interest areas of the classroom and outdoors, children can choose from a variety of activities that will help them construct knowledge about their world. Much of the learning is thus informal: teachers create a well-organized and exciting environment and children have daily opportunities to explore and try out their ideas.

Teachers can also promote children's cognitive development by engaging them in long-term studies[4]. A study enables teachers to focus planning around a topic that is of interest to children. Teachers can plan activities and experiences that invite children to raise questions, collect information, and demonstrate what they know.

Appropriate topics for a study are based on children's immediate interests.

The most appropriate topics grow out of the children's interests and what is happening in their own community. For example, children living in a fishing village in Alaska might be engaged in learning about different kinds of fish; children in a city might be investigating different stores in the neighborhood; and children in a rural area might be learning about the operations of a farm.

An appropriate topic matches the developmental abilities and interests of the children. Three-year-olds are primarily focused on themselves and their families. Fours want to know about other children and their neighborhood. And fives typically ask questions about how things are made, who does what jobs, and how things work.

In selecting an appropriate topic, consider the following questions:

- Does the topic address children's interests?
- Is the topic real, relevant to children's experiences, and age appropriate?
- Can children explore the topic first-hand?
- Are resources—such as people to talk to, places to visit, objects or living things to observe and explore, books—available?
- Can the topic be explored in a variety of ways over an extended period?
- Can children apply a variety of skills to exploring the topic?

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[4] This discussion is based on *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd Ed.*, Diane Trister Dodge & Laura J. Colker (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), pp. 54-56, and *Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades*, Diane Trister Dodge, Judy R. Jablon, & Toni S. Bickart (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc. 1994), pp. 157-173.

Learn as much as you can about a topic.

Once you have identified an appropriate topic, gather all the information you can find. The children's librarian can identify a number of good books on most topics. Looking through these resources will inspire you to think of a wide range of "big ideas" and experiences you can offer children. For example, in a study about hats, some big ideas to explore with children might be the following: "We wear different kinds of hats for different purposes" and "Hats are made of different kinds of materials."

Identify and then visit any places you plan to take the children. This will give you many ideas for focusing children's attention when you do take the trip. Talk to people who work there about what you want children to see and about safety issues.

Gather pictures, books, and other items related to the topic that you can share with the children. Parents can be excellent resources and may, in fact, be experts on the topic. Involving family members in a study is a wonderful way to enrich children's experiences.

Plan experiences that will enable children to be active investigators.

As previously discussed, childen learn best when they can actively question, explore, and research a topic. Through investigation, children see, hear, touch, smell, and as a result, develop a personal understanding. Investigation experiences can take many forms. Children investigate when they:

pose questions
take trips
conduct interviews
have discussions
explore materials
create experiments
handle objects
look at pictures
observe objects/events
listen to experts

The kinds of experiences you plan will vary depending on the topic. Active investigation experiences related to a study on caterpillars and butterflies might involve collecting caterpillars, finding out what kind of environment they need, and what they eat; creating an appropriate caterpillar or butterfly home in the classroom; observing them closely over time; taking a trip to a nature center to see an exhibit; talking to experts; taking photos of how they change.

Provide opportunities for children to recreate what they are learning.

When we learn something new and then describe it in our own words, draw a picture of it, or act it out, we deepen our understanding. Children gain understanding when they recreate what they have learned. As children investigate and make discoveries, they relate this new information to what they already know. When they represent their ideas in drawings, block structures, or models, they demonstrate what they know.

Materials for constructing these representations may include the following:

blocks
markers, crayons and paper
tempera paint and water colors
clay and playdough
collage materials
journals and colored pencils
cartons and boxes

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Children can also recreate what they have learned through dramatic play. In dramatic play, children take on different roles, create imaginary settings and situations, use appropriate props, dress up, interact with others, and recall the sequence of events. For example, children might want to set up a post office after visiting one and interviewing the people who work there. This would involve creating or obtaining the appropriate props, deciding on who will take different roles, and arranging for "customers" to come and mail letters. Dramatization experiences can also involve acting out a story, making up a play and presenting it, or putting on a puppet show.

When teachers plan studies that engage children's interest, surprising things can happen. Children come up with ideas and questions about the topic, and this often leads to new investigations and the need to recreate what children have discovered. Teachers have to be good observers and be willing to change plans, add new props and materials, and follow children in new directions. In many cases, children and teachers become co-constructors of knowledge.

A long-term study should have a closing activity.

Some studies last for more than a month, others might last just a few weeks. The length of a study depends on how involved children become and the variety of experiences and materials you can offer children as they explore a topic.

After spending considerable time on a study, it is important to give some thought to how it will end. Closing activities for a study might be a class book of drawings and photographs on the study; a display of projects and artwork children created; a play presented to family members. Closing activities give children a chance to share what they have learned and feel pride in their accomplishments.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you plan a long-term study that will engage children in conducting first-hand research. First you identify an appropriate topic using the criteria described above. Then you identify ways you can learn about the topic, the investigation experiences you will offer children, and what opportunities you will plan for them to recreate what they have learned. Finally, you describe how you will conclude the study. Begin by reading the example on the next page.

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Planning a Long-Term Study

(Example)

Topic you selected: *How Buildings Are Built*

Explain why this topic is appropriate for your children:

A building is under construction across the street from our program. The children have been talking about the large machinery brought in to dig the foundation. Antonio's uncle is the foreman on the job and Antonio talks about him with such pride that other children have become interested. Because it's so close, we can take trips regularly to observe what is happening. We can study the construction site over an extended period—probably all year.

What did you do to prepare for this study?

I talked to Antonio's uncle about the project, and he was very open to helping. He will let me know when something interesting is happening so we can visit at those times and take pictures. I made a list of the different jobs people do and who the children might interview. The children's librarian gave me some excellent books on construction projects, story books, and resource books. I've been reading through these resources for ideas. I also found some posters of construction workers and the machines they use which I will display in the classroom.

What are some "big ideas" children can investigate?

People have different kinds of jobs on a construction site. They use machines and equipment for different purposes. Buildings go up in a certain order.

What investigation experiences will you offer children?

We will visit the site regularly during the year and take photographs of what is happening. We will have discussions about what we saw after each trip. Antonio's uncle will be visiting our class to talk to the children. He will also give us a tour of the site. I plan to take pictures of each worker we interview and make a chart with the children's comments about what they learned from each person. Before each interview, we will discuss what we know about the job that person does and what questions we have.

What opportunities will you provide for children to recreate what they are learning?

I'll add bulldozers, tubes, backhoes, ramps, derricks, and construction workers to the block corner. In the house corner, I'll put hard hats, lunch boxes, carpenter aprons, work boots, and work shirts. The books will be added to the library. We will make a mural of the site and children can make a scrap book tracing the whole project.

How do you plan to conclude the study.

This study will go on all year, so I plan to do other studies as well. At the end of the year, we'll have a family night dinner so the children can share what they learned. We will have the scrapbook, the mural, and lots of photos and stories the children can talk about.

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Planning a Long-Term Study

Topic you selected:

Explain why this topic is appropriate for your children:

What are some "big ideas" children can investigate?

What investigation experiences will you offer children?

What opportunities will you provide for children to recreate what they are learning?

How do you plan to conclude the study.

Discuss your plan with your colleagues and trainer.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or a new one, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for promoting children's cognitive development.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about promoting children's cognitive development during the time you were working on this module. Compare your ideas to those in the completed chart at the end of the module.

- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

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Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 239-241)

Creating an Environment That Encourages Children to Explore and Discover

1. **Why did Ms. Thomas give the string and scissors to the children?**
   a. *She wanted to encourage the children to solve the problem themselves.*

   b. *She knew the children could work together to find an answer to their question.*

2. **What did the children learn from their experience?**
   a. *They are capable of thinking and solving their own problems.*

   b. *They can find ways to use materials in new ways.*

   c. *Sometimes how something looks can be deceiving.*

Interacting with Children in Ways That Help Them Confident in Their Ability to Think and Reason

1. **Why did Ms. Williams not interfere with the block builders when she could see that their building might fall down?**
   a. *She knew that no one would get hurt when the blocks fell.*

   b. *She wanted to let the children find out for themselves what would happen.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams encourage the children to think through and solve the problem on their own?**
   a. *She asked questions that helped the children think about what made the building fall.*

   b. *She didn't give them any solutions but helped them think of their own ideas.*

   c. *She encouraged them to try out their ideas.*

Providing Opportunities for Children to Construct Knowledge About Their World

1. **How did Ms. Richards introduce and generate interest in the balance scale?**
   a. *She had the children use their hands to create a balance scale.*

   b. *She let the children measure two sets of objects in their hands and let them determine which felt heavier.*

2. **What skills and concepts were the children learning?**
   a. *They were learning to compare the weight of two objects.*

   b. *They were gaining first-hand experience with how balance scales work.*

   c. *They were learning that four objects could be lighter than one.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development

(p. 250)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Cognitive Development
They learn by using all their senses—smell, taste, touch, sight, and sound.	*Make a tape of familiar sounds and ask children to guess what each sound is. Offer various textured items for collage making. Talk about how foods smell and taste. Have children identify mystery objects in a bag by touch.*
They are interested in cause and effect—what makes things happen.	*Comment on children's discoveries. Provide objects to explore and plan activities that let children test ideas (e.g., what happens when a plant isn't watered). Talk about the effects and what might have been the cause.*
They have rapidly expanding vocabularies—they can name many things and explain their ideas.	*Introduce new words for vocabulary building. Provide names for objects, feelings, places, events, and so on. Talk with children and encourage them to describe their activities, feelings, and ideas.*
They are curious and want to explore many things.	*Set up a safe environment in which children can choose materials they want and carry out their plans. Put out new and interesting materials for children to investigate with their senses and with tools, such as a magnifying glass.*
They learn by using their imaginations in dramatic play and other activities.	*Offer new props and materials that build on children's play themes. Create prop boxes tied to themes of interest to the children. Step into a dramatic play role to comment or make suggestions that will lead the children to a higher level of play.*
They believe there is a purpose for everything and ask many questions: "Why?" "How?" "What?"	*Take children's questions seriously. Ask questions yourself to find out what they really want to know. Give answers they can understand and ask more questions to stretch their thinking. Admit when you don't know the answer. Model ways to use books and other resources to find answers.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development

(p. 251)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Cognitive Development
They construct knowledge by exploring and making connections between new experiences and what they know from past experiences.	*Make comments and ask questions that encourage children to construct their own understandings. "It took two scoops of water to fill the cup. How many scoops of water will it take to fill the pitcher. Do they both hold the same amount of water?"*
They are developing an understanding of numerical concepts but need many experiences with real objects.	*Offer a variety of materials children can use to sort, group, match, count, and sequence. Help them practice counting and matching one to one while setting the table, counting the times they ride around the tricycle track, and sorting the blocks.*
They learn to match, classify, and identify shapes and colors by playing with toys and objects.	*Provide a variety of appealing table toys and interesting materials such as rocks, shells, buttons, and keys. Comment on what children are doing: "You made a row of red pegs." "You lined up the rocks by size, from large to small."*
They have many ideas and like to gather information about the world.	*Go on neighborhood trips. Collect leaves, rocks, and other items on a nature walk, then have children explore and organize the objects. Invite children to share their ideas with the group.*
They are beginning to understand that pictures, letters, words, and numbers represent real objects and ideas.	*Use word, picture, and number labels to identify materials, cubbies, and interest areas and to provide information such as how many children can use an area at one time. Write children's stories on charts and in home-made books so children can connect spoken words to print.*

Glossary

Abstract thinking

The ability to think about ideas and concepts in one's head without using concrete materials.

Classify

To put objects or events in groups on the basis of a common characteristic or attribute.

Closed question

A question for which there is only one right answer.

Cognitive development

Development of the ability to think and reason.

Concept

An idea that combines details or several other ideas in an organized way.

Concrete

Relating to real objects.

Construct knowledge

To actively seek to understand an event or idea by applying what one already knows to make a new experience meaningful.

Discriminate

To notice the differences among things.

Egocentric

The belief that everyone thinks the same thoughts and has the same feelings.

Long-term study

Planning opportunities for children to investigate a topic over time and recreate what they have learned.

Open-ended question

A question that can be answered in many ways.

Open-ended material

A toy or other item that children can use in different ways.

Problem-solving

The process of thinking through a problem and coming up with one or several possible solutions.

Representation

The act of creating a model of something such as a building built with blocks, a picture of a flower, or a clay dog.

Sequencing

Putting things or events in logical order.

Module 6: Communication

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Overview

Promoting children's communication skills involves:

- Encouraging children to listen and speak
- Helping children use language in meaningful ways
- Providing materials and experiences that support emerging literacy skills

Communication is the ability to express and share ideas, desires, and feelings with other people using words or nonverbal methods. Children develop communication skills in five related areas: listening, comprehending, speaking, reading, writing. Each of these skills is an important part of children's emerging literacy—the gradual, ongoing process of learning to communicate through language.

Literacy skills emerge gradually over time.

The foundation for literacy is established in early childhood. Children construct their own knowledge about literacy through active exploration of their environment and through interactions with adults, peers, and older children. The drive to communicate is very strong and begins within the first few months of life. The cries of newborns are reflexive, but soon babies learn that crying will bring a trusted adult to meet their needs. Within a short time, infants communicate joy by smiling and cooing when they see a familiar face. As parents and caregivers respond, infants begin learning about the give and take of conversations.

By the end of their first year, babies are communicating intentionally, through verbal and nonverbal means. They make sounds while pointing at objects they want or while raising their arms to be picked up. Within a few years, a toddler develops the ability to understand and use language. Children learn to say thousands of words, to understand what the words mean, and the rules for using words simply by being around adults who listen to them, talk to them, and introduce them to reading and writing. When adults encourage and respond to children's efforts to communicate, children's emerging literacy skills develop naturally.

The ability to communicate affects all areas of development.

Understanding and using language is crucial to cognitive development. Learning depends on a child's ever-growing ability to make meaning out of words and eventually to read and write them. Social development, too, depends on language. The child with highly developed verbal skills may form friendships more easily than one who has difficulty expressing him or herself. And language is an important factor in emotional development. Children gain confidence when they can use words to communicate their feelings accurately to others.

Teachers play a central role in helping children acquire communication skills.

Teachers promote children's communication skills in several ways. They listen and respond to children's thoughts and feelings, engage them in conversations, and encourage them to use words to tell others what they want. Teachers serve as language models for children. By using words to describe what a child is doing, they help the child become more aware of objects and actions. Teachers also create an environment that shows children the many uses for language. They label cubbies, makes signs for interest areas, write down children's dictated stories, and encourage children to play and talk with each other. Finally, teachers provide a variety of books and other written materials that respond to children's cultures, interests, experience, and skills. They include paper and writing tools in each interest area and help children discover the pleasures of words through storytelling, poems, finger plays, and songs.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers promote children's communication skills. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

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Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

Accept a child's way of speaking while serving as a model for standard use of language.	If a child says "I throwed the ball," the teacher could say, "Yes, you threw the ball a long way."
Encourage children to talk to each other by making suggestions or planning activities that will accommodate just a few children.	"It looks like Sarah's baby is sick. Why don't you ask her what's the matter?
Pay close attention to children's words and actions and help them express their ideas clearly.	"Are you saying that you want to use the wagon?"
Make comments and ask questions that communicate interest and help children learn how to take turns in conversations.	"Your dad said you had fun at the street festival on Saturday. What did you like best?"
Stop while reading a story to talk about the characters and what they are doing.	"Why do you think Frances' mother keeps giving her bread and jam sandwiches for every meal?"
Be aware of signs of a possible speech disorder or hearing impairment and discuss these observations with the child's parents.	"A language development assessment could help us why Lars continues to use single words to communicate and what we can do to support him."
Learn words in children's home languages to reinforce their language development.	"¡Buen trabajo Selena! Good job! You certainly did a lot of planning to build that."

Jerry, who just turned three, taps Ms. Kim on her shoulder and points toward the block corner. "Do you want me to see something in the block corner?" asks Ms. Kim. Jerry nods and leads her there. He points at David, who is making an enclosure for the red truck. "Mine," says Jerry picking up the truck. "I need it," says David, grabbing it back. "Were you playing with the red truck, Jerry?" asks Ms. Kim. Jerry nods and holds the truck tightly. "Then say, 'David, I'm playing with the truck.'" Jerry says, "I play with truck." Ms. Kim asks David what he is making. "A garage," he answers. "Maybe you and Jerry could make it big enough for the truck and the cars. Do you want to do that, Jerry?" Jerry says, "Make my own." Ms. Kim says, "You could have two garages with a road in between. Then your cars and trucks can go back and forth. Is that okay?" The boys agree. "It's nice to see you can work together," says Ms. Kim. "Next time, Jerry, you can use your words to tell David what you want. I'll come back soon to see how you're doing."

1. How did Ms. Kim know what Jerry wanted?

2. How did Ms. Kim help Jerry use words to express his feelings and thoughts?

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Helping Children Use Language in Meaningful Ways

Tape picture and word labels to containers and shelves where toys and materials are stored.	"Please put the truck on the shelf with the picture of the big dump truck."
Record children's words that describe their work.	"I'm going to write what you said. 'This is a bus bringing my mommy home.'"
Make and post at children's eye-level signs with words and pictures that provide information or ask children to make choices.	"Write your name under the apple or the pear so we'll know what we need for snack."
Help children make and display signs that communicate their own ideas.	"You can use the paper and markers on the shelf to make signs for your store."
Involve children in making books about topics or events that are important to them.	"This book is about all the new things you are learning to do for yourselves. Listen and you will hear all your names in the story."
Show children how adults use reading and writing to learn or to do a task.	"The book that came with our new computer program will tell me how to install it."

"Welcome back!" says Mr. Lopez to Kara, Avida, and Ms. Nolan, an intern from the community college. The children and Ms. Nolan have just returned from a walk to the park across the street from the program. "What did you see on your walk?" "We saw a big bird!" Grace tells him. "And a bird's nest," Kara adds. "The bird was flying around and then it sat on its nest," Avida explains. Mr. Lopez asks, "Would you two like to write a story about what you saw at the park?" Kara and Avida get some paper and markers from the shelf and begin scribbling on their paper. Ms. Nolan asks, "What does your story say?" "That's a picture of the bird," Kara says. "It says bird." "Tell me more about the bird you saw," says Ms. Nolan, "and I'll write down what you say." "We saw a big bird," Kara dictates. "It sat on its nest in a tree," Avida adds. Ms. Nolan writes their words and reads them aloud.

1. **Why did Mr. Lopez suggest that the children write a story?**

2. **How did Ms. Nolan help the children use language in meaningful ways?**

Providing Materials and Experiences That Support Emerging Literacy Skills

Create a well-lit, carpeted, library area with comfortable places to sit and books displayed so the covers face out.	"Carson, if want to read another 'Clifford' book, look for his picture on the cover."
Create a writing area, within or separate from the library area, stocked with reading and writing materials.	"Janine, the mailbox is very full. Would you like to deliver the letters?"
Provide props and dress-up clothes that support children's interests and emerging literacy skills.	Here are some prescription pads the doctor can use."
Teach children short poems and finger plays during transitions or activities.	"This is the way we clean the brushes, clean the brushes, clean the brushes!"
Display books, including some in children's home languages, that match children's abilities and reflect their cultures and families in positive ways.	"The librarian showed me an entire shelf of Spanish versions of the children's favorite books."
Read to children at story time and in response to requests; invite children to retell familiar stories.	"Who can tell us what happened in the story when the rainbow fish learned to share?"
Encourage family reading and writing times by lending books and sharing donated writing supplies.	"Ms. Vaughn, Carly would like to borrow this book so you two can read it at home."

Ms. Williams is about to read a story, *Caps for Sale*, to a small group of children. She begins by saying, "Today I'm going to read the story about a peddler who sells caps. He has a funny way to carry his caps. Does anyone remember where he carries them?" "On his head," shout the children. "Right, and here he is," says Ms. Williams, showing the children the cover of the book. "He also has a special order for wearing the caps. First his own checkered cap, then the . . ." Ms. Williams listens while the children tell which color comes first and then in what order the caps are arranged. She reads the story with lots of expression, pausing to let the children recite familiar phrases. After reading the story, Ms. Williams brings out some caps so the children can act out the story.

1. **What did Ms. Williams do to interest the children in hearing the story?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams use the group story time to support children's emerging literacy skills?**

Your Own Experiences with Communication

Communication skills are central to our ability to relate to others. Effective communication involves receiving a message, interpreting it, and sending back an appropriate response.

Many factors affect communication.

Many factors influence how well we understand the communications we receive from others. These include how we are feeling at that moment, how well we know the person, and how carefully we listen. For example, suppose you've had a bad morning before coming to work. You are feeling overwhelmed. Your colleague greets you by saying: ""This storeroom is a mess! I can't find anything in it!"

You may interpret this message as a criticism and respond defensively: "When am I supposed to find the time to deal with the storeroom? I can hardly keep up with everything else I have to do!" Your colleague may be surprised by your response and herself react defensively: "Don't you think I'm just as busy as you are?" Neither of you meant to cause angry feelings, but that's exactly what happened.

On another day, when you are feeling more on top of things, you might interpret the message very differently and respond, "You're absolutely right. We've been so busy with other things, we never seem to get to the storeroom. Maybe we can ask for a parent volunteer to help us out." This time you interpret the message as a simple statement about a problem that needs to be addressed.

Communication involves receiving and interpreting information clearly.

Effective communication skills allow us to accurately convey our thoughts and feelings to others. We send messages verbally (using words) and nonverbally (using gestures and body language).

Verbal messages can be clear if we say what we mean ("I'd like to go to a movie tonight. What time is best for you?"). But they can be unclear if we fail to express our true thoughts, hoping the other person will give us the answer we want ("What do you feel like doing tonight?").

In addition to sending clear messages, we need to receive them as they were intended. Sometimes this requires that the sender provide more information. To help clarify the message, use questions and statements such as the following:

- Are you saying that . . . ?
- Do you mean . . . ?
- Do I understand correctly that . . . ?
- It sounds like you want . . . .

How do you rate your ability to communicate effectively?

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. I state my ideas clearly.	☐	☐	☐
2. I express my feelings in words.	☐	☐	☐
3. If I'm not sure what someone means, I seek more information from the sender.	☐	☐	☐
4. I pay attention to gestures and body language when interpreting a sender's message.	☐	☐	☐

Review your answers to this brief checklist. Are there any areas you would like to improve? As you go through this module and learn ways of helping children communicate, you may discover some strategies for improving your own communication skills.

When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of the module if you need definitions of the terms that are used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to promote children's communication skills. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right of each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Accept a child's way of speaking while serving as a model for standard use of language.	☐	☐	☐
2. Encourage children to talk to one another by making suggestions or planning activities that will accommodate just a few children.	☐	☐	☐
3. Pay close attention to children's words and actions and help them express their ideas clearly.	☐	☐	☐
4. Make comments and ask questions that communicate interest and help children learn how to take turns in conversations.	☐	☐	☐
5. Stop while reading a story to talk about the characters and what they are doing.	☐	☐	☐
6. Be aware of signs of a possible speech disorder, or hearing impairment and discuss these observations with the child's parents.	☐	☐	☐
7. Learn words in children's home languages to reinforce their language development.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Use Language in Meaningful Ways

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Tape picture and word labels to containers and shelves where toys and materials are stored.	☐	☐	☐
9. Record children's words that describe their work.	☐	☐	☐
10. Make and post at children's eye-level signs with words.	☐	☐	☐
11. Involve children in making books about topics or events that are important to them.	☐	☐	☐
12. Show children how adults use reading and writing to learn to do a task.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Materials and Experiences That Support Emerging Literacy Skills

13. Create a well-lit, carpeted, library area with comfortable places to sit and books displayed so the covers face out.	☐	☐	☐
14. Create a writing area, within or separate from the library area, stockedwith reading and writing materials.	☐	☐	☐
15. Provide props and dress-up clothes that support children's interests and emerging literacy skills.	☐	☐	☐
16. Teach children short poems and finger plays during transitions or activities.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Materials and Experiences That Support Emerging Literacy Skill

(continued)

	I Do This: Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
17. Display books, including some in children's home languages, that match children's abilities and reflect their cultures and families.	☐	☐	☐
18. Read to children at story times and in response to requests; invite children to retell familiar stories.	☐	☐	☐
19. Encourage family reading and writing times by lending books and sharing donated writing supplies.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

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Begin the learning activities for Module 6, Communication.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Language Skills

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical behaviors of preschool children that are related to language development
- Use what you know about children to promote their language skills

The foundation for a child's ability to understand and use language is rooted in the loving relationships between infants and their parents and caregivers. Adults attempt to make sense of infants' cries, coos, and gestures and introduce the back and forth nature of human interactions. When adults convey positive feelings, infants soon express similar feelings of pleasure. As in all areas of development, children learn to understand and use language at their own pace. Some say their first words at age one; others hardly speak at all before age two.

Language is a powerful tool for preschool children.

Preschool children use language for many purposes—to gain information, understand concepts, express feelings, share ideas, make plans, and solve problems. Their interest in learning about the world around them is evident in the continual questions they ask. Preschool children tell stories to describe past events or express imaginative ideas. They use language in increasingly complex and involved forms of dramatic play. They talk about what they want to do, who will play what role, and what will happen.

Preschool children are learning about the art of conversation.

Most preschool children like to talk—to each other, to teachers, and sometimes to themselves. When preschool children converse, they are learning subtle and complex cues about interaction. They find ways to enter a conversation or change its direction, and they learn how to give and get information. They also discover what kinds of talk are appropriate in specific situations.

Some preschool children talk to themselves while they play.

It's not unusual to hear preschool children (especially younger ones) carry on lively solitary conversations as they play. This is one way they practice using language. Children may say words over and over until they can pronounce them without thinking. They might repeat a chant—"bop, bop, boppity, bop"—or describe what they are doing. For example, a child might talk to himself while recalling something he already knows how to do—make purple paint:

> "Red and blue makes purple. First, some red." Colin pours some red paint into an empty container. "Now I need some blue." He adds blue paint to the container. "Stir it all around." He stirs the paint with his brush, then makes a purple circle on his paper. "That's really purple."

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Children enjoy the sounds of language and often use words creatively.

Preschool children enjoy making all kinds of sounds—words, nonsense syllables, rhythmic chants, and tapping feet. Many children love poems, chants, and songs with rhymes and repetitive words and phrases. Teachers can introduce traditional chants such as: "One potato, two potato, three potato, four . . ." and make up chants that describe children's activities: "We're putting on our coats and hats, coats and hats, . . ."

Children sometimes make up their own words, and they use words creatively. Adults who are good listeners can hear children using language imaginatively.

- "A hopicoper" describes a helicopter.
- "A doesn't-smell bush" describes an azalea bush that has no fragrance.
- "Mess-up paper" is scrap paper.

Children can learn to use words rather than fists to handle disagreements.

Every day children learn new words and discover different approaches to making themselves heard and understood by other people. They do this while negotiating how to take turns using a toy, describing something that happened to them, or directing each other's play. As their language skills grow, children become increasingly able to convey their feelings in words rather than through actions. The more accurately they can describe what is bothering them, the better able they are to resolve problems with words rather than aggression.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next two pages lists some typical behaviors of preschool children. Included are behaviors relevant to the development of communication skills. The right-hand column asks you to identify ways that teachers can use this information about child development to promote communication skills. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module, you will learn new strategies for promoting communication skills and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at once. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of the module. By the time you complete all the learning activities, you will find that you have learned many ways to promote children's communication skills.

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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Communication Skills

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Communication Skills
They use language to think, learn, imagine, plan, make requests, direct others, and solve problems.	*Plan activities and provide materials in each interest area that allow children to use language for different purposes. Talk and listen to children and encourage them to talk and listen to each other. Expect that the classroom will be filled with children's voices.*
They tell stories about imaginary and real experiences that take place in the past as well as in the present.	
They participate and take turns in conversations with peers and adults.	
They make up and act out scenarios with plots and different characters who solve a problem or do something specific.	
They can retell favorite stories, sometimes in correct sequence.	
They ask many questions and can answer open-ended questions that have no right or wrong response.	

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Communication Skills

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Communication Skills
They learn most rules of grammar without direct instruction. They may make mistakes because there are exceptions to a rule.	
They may be learning one language at home and another at the program.	
They are learning that printed words are symbols for spoken words and convey messages.	
They scribble and write invented letters and words.	
They like a wide variety of books.	
They can memorize songs, poems, rhymes, and books with repetition.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of ways teachers can promote language development.

II. Observing Children's Listening and Speaking Skills

In this activity you will learn to:

- Observe how children use and respond to language
- Identify signs a child is gaining listening and speaking skills

As with other areas of development, the language skills of preschool children vary greatly. Some children talk constantly, while others speak mainly when spoken to. Some speak in long, complex sentences, while others make brief statements and need to be encouraged to expand their ideas. Some children pronounce sounds and words with great precision, while others are still learning to master vowels and consonant sounds. It can be difficult to know when a child is learning to listen and speak at a slower, but perfectly normal pace, and when a child needs special attention. You will know that a child is making progress in language development, if he or she:

- reacts with pleasure to sounds, poetry, dramatic play, stories, and music;
- uses the teacher's name in conversations or to get attention;
- understands, remembers, and responds to the speech of other;
- seeks answers to questions.

Children acquire sounds of speech in a predictable pattern. Before speaking in phrases and sentences, children learn the sounds of speech (consonants and vowels) in a language. As they learn to make speech sounds by shaping their mouths and coordinating their teeth and tongues, they will often make mistakes. In fact, most children do not master all speech sounds until about age eight. So, it is quite appropriate for a three- or four-year-old to have difficulty making the "th" or "ch" sound, while a six- or seven-year-old may have no trouble at all. It is important for teachers to understand the developmental stages of speech so that they know what is normal and what is appropriate for children at different ages.

Making mistakes is a normal part of speech and language development.

It's also perfectly natural and normal for preschool children to make mistakes in using language. In fact, mistakes are signs that children are mastering standard rules of grammar, such as adding "s" to a noun to make it plural. They make mistakes because there are exceptions to many rules. It takes time to master all of these exceptions. Here are some typical mistakes a child might make:

"I have two feets." "She's my goodest friend."
"I hurted my knee." "I feeled happy."

The best way for teachers to respond to such mistakes is simply to restate what the child has said using standard language. "Yes, you have two feet." Children are embarrassed when adults constantly point out their mistakes or ask them to say something correctly. These interruptions can cause children to lose their train of thought and may discourage future attempts to express ideas and feelings. For example, Harold has discovered that he can describe past events by adding "ed" to the end of a verb. He says, "I runned all the way around the playground." Instead of correcting his mistake, Ms. Richards responds, "That was a long way. You ran very far." Over time, as Harold listens to Ms. Richards and other people who model standard use of language, he will learn the exceptions to this and other grammatical rules.

Some children are learning two languages at the same time.

There may be children in your class who are learning a second language at the program, usually English, after having learned a first language at home. In such situations, it is perfectly normal for children to say very little for several months. Once children begin talking at the program, they are likely to use words from both languages in the same sentence, temporarily lose some skills in their home language, and make many grammatical errors. Children with strong skills in their first language, however, are more able to develop language skills in the second. Teachers can build on these skills by encouraging children to use their first language at the program, as well as at home. If possible, speak with the child in his or her first language. If this is not possible, learn a few important words in the home language, seek classroom volunteers who speak the language, and encourage children who speak the same first language to play together.

Some children may need greater exposure to words and language use.

Children who have little exposure to language in their home settings may appear to have language delays. Their language skills will grow if they have opportunities to explore the world beyond their homes, play and talk with other children, and interact with adults. Such children are more likely to talk if you show by your facial expression and undivided attention that you think they have something important to say. Listen patiently for as long as it takes a child to make a statement or ask a question. Make sure the classroom setting helps children feel comfortable and secure so they will be willing to talk.

These strategies can help children increase their vocabularies and make sense of grammatical rules.

Try these strategies to help children with limited language skills:

Restate children's words and introduce the names of objects, actions, and feelings. "You would like to use the pots and pans. Tell Nina, 'I want to use the pots and pans.'"

Introduce concepts by describing what children are doing. "You are rolling the truck on the carpet. Now you are rolling it up the ramp. Now you are rolling it down the ramp."

Repeat several examples of standard use of language at one time. When a child asks, "He goes out?" the teacher can respond, "Is he going out? Yes, he is going out. Ron is also going out. Are you going out?"

Talk more slowly than normal so children can hear your words and pay attention to how your sentence is organized.

Stuttering is common among preschoolers. Children may stutter because they have had little practice in speaking, or because they are trying to talk too fast. They might repeat words or have difficulty getting a word out. When a child is excited or frightened, he or she is even more likely to stutter. Stuttering often goes away as the child learns to speak more slowly and carefully. Be patient when listening and responding to a child who is stuttering. Your calm demeanor will help the child relax and speak more slowly. Also, look for possible reasons for stuttering. Is the child worried or scared? Is the child's speech corrected often or does the child have his words or sentences finished for him? Does the program environment help the child feel secure? Is there a predictable schedule to help the child feel comfortable?

There are several reasons why a child might stutter.

Some preschoolers have extremely limited language skills and show few signs of progress. In these instances, teachers need more information to effectively encourage the child's language development. If there is no other explanation for a child's limited language skills, he or she may have a language delay, a physical abnormality, such as with the teeth, palate, tongue, or vocal cords, a respiratory problem, a hearing problem, or a speech disorder such as lisping. The following are signs that a preschooler might have a speech and language disorder:

Be alert to signs of a possible speech or language disorder.

- The child doesn't talk.
- The child's speech is largely unintelligible.
- The child does not use two to three word sentences.
- The child uses mostly vowel sounds.
- The child talks in a monotone.
- The child sounds as if he or she were talking through the nose.
- The child doesn't answer questions, understand what is said, or follow verbal directions.

If any of the above signs are present over an extended period of time, it is a good idea to refer the parents to a speech pathologist, a specialist who can give the child a comprehensive language assessment and determine the child's skills and needs. The speech pathologist can suggest specific strategies to use at at the program and at home.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you select two children and observe their language skills over a one-week period. Use the form "Observing Children's Language Skills" to identify the skills you will be observing about each child. If possible, select one child who is learning a second language. Be sure to observe each child using language in various situations, such as indoor and outdoor choice time, a routine, while playing alone and with a group. Also, observe and record how each child uses language for different purposes, for example, to get information, give directions, or solve a problem. Begin by reading the example on the next page.

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Observing Children's Language Skills
(Example)

Child: *Nadia* **Age:** *4 years* **Dates:** *March 2 - 6*

Listening and Talking Skills	Summary
Uses words to communicate thoughts and ideas.	*Nadia uses short sentences to express herself. She is more likely to talk to a teacher one-on-one than in a group situation.*
Uses words to negotiate, solve disagreements, and express strong feelings.	*This skill was not observed. Nadia is quite shy so she tends to play alone more than with other children.*
Uses language creatively; makes up words; enjoys nonsense words and rhymes.	*During small group time I taught the children a new fingerplay. Nadia smiled and quickly learned the hand and finger movements. She took longer to learn the words.*
Uses language in dramatic play situations.	*Again, her shy nature leads her to play alone rather than with others.*
Asks and answers questions.	*Answers questions with a single word. Rarely asks questions.*
Participates in conversations with teachers and/or children.	*Rarely starts conversations with adults or with other children.*
Makes mistakes that show an understanding of standard rules of grammar.	*I did not observe this.*
Needs to work on specific language skills.	*She has a very soft voice, so it's difficult for others to understand what she's saying.*

Observing Children's Language Skills

Child #1: ______________ **Age:** __________ **Dates:** ________

Listening and Talking Skills	Summary
Uses words to communicate thoughts and ideas.	
Uses words to negotiate, solve disagreements, and express strong feelings.	
Uses language creatively; makes up words; enjoys nonsense words and rhymes.	
Uses language in dramatic play situations.	
Asks and answers questions.	
Participates in conversations with teachers and/or children.	
Makes mistakes that show an understanding of standard rules of grammar.	
Needs to work on specific language skills.	

Observing Children's Language Skills

Child #2: ______________________ **Age:** ______________ **Dates:** ____________

Listening and Talking Skills	Summary
Uses words to communicate thoughts and ideas.	
Uses words to negotiate, solve disagreements, and express strong feelings.	
Uses language creatively; makes up words; enjoys nonsense words and rhymes.	
Uses language in dramatic play situations.	
Asks and answers questions.	
Participates in conversations with teachers and/or children.	
Makes mistakes that show an understanding of standard rules of grammar.	
Needs to work on specific language skills.	

Discuss your completed charts with your trainer.

III. Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

In this activity you will learn to:

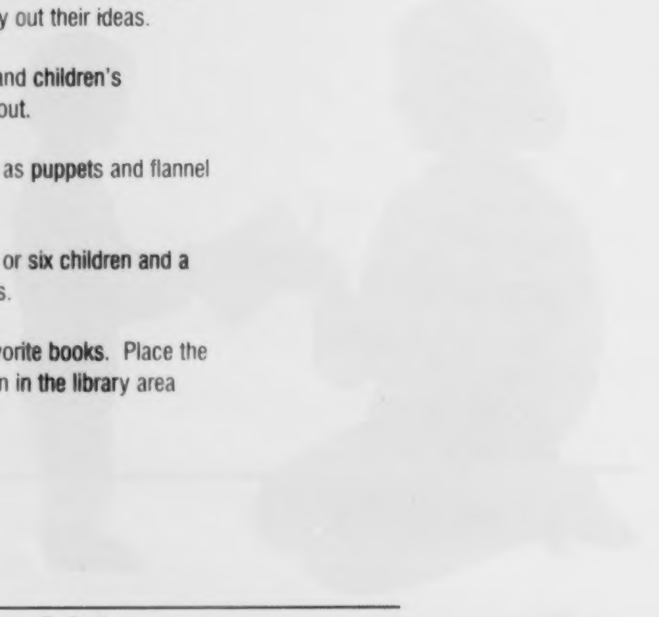
- Use the environment to encourage communication
- Help children learn how to participate in conversations

The more opportunities children have to listen and speak, the more skilled they will become. A room in which children feel free, relaxed, and encouraged to communicate is not a quiet room. Teachers must be willing to accept a certain level of chatter and noise to encourage language development.

Many of the strategies for creating a learning environment found in Module 3 will encourage preschool children to practice and expand their language skills. Here are some specific ideas.

An interesting environment promotes listening and talking.

- Set up interest areas where children can work and play in small groups.
- Offer interesting materials—an old radio to take apart or funnels and plastic tubing for the water table—that encourage children to explore, ask questions, talk about their ideas, and play with each other.
- Provide dramatic play props that encourage children to listen and speak. Two or more telephones can lead to many lively conversations. With menus and tablecloths in the house corner, children can set up a restaurant with servers and customers.
- Plan some group projects, such as painting a mural or making bread. Help the children plan projects together and carry out their ideas.
- Take trips and walks in the neighborhood to expand children's experiences and give them new things to talk about.
- Offer materials that promote language use, such as puppets and flannel boards.
- Eat family-style meals at small tables where five or six children and a teacher can take part in interesting conversations.
- Ask parents to make audiotapes of children's favorite books. Place the books and tapes in plastic bags and display them in the library area near the tape player and headphones.



Help children feel comfortable and relaxed.

Most children will express their ideas and feelings more freely if they feel comfortable and relaxed. They may need to get to know you and the other children, learn to follow your predictable schedule, explore new and unfamiliar materials, remember what to do during routines, and master their feelings about separating from their families.

You've probably noticed that the most verbal children tend to make friends easily. It's especially important to be aware of shy children who may require your help to feel accepted by their peers and to learn how to express themselves. Similarly, children are more likely to respond to your questions and share their thoughts after they learn that you will accept them as they are.

Accepting children's efforts to communicate means:

- encouraging both verbal and nonverbal attempts to communicate;
- never degrading what a child says;
- waiting patiently until a child is ready to speak;
- getting down to the child's level and listening carefully and patiently.

The rules of conversation are complex.

To be effective communicators, children need to learn how to participate in conversations. Here's how two children might use conversation rules while talking with each other.

Conversation Rules	Example
You can start or join a conversation by saying something to another person and waiting for a response.	*"What are you doing?"* *"We're building a zoo with lots of different animals."*
People take turns in conversations. It is your turn when the other person has finished talking. You should finish what you are saying so the other person can have a turn.	*"Will there be monkeys in the zoo? I like them the best because they're so silly."*
"Look at and listen to the person speaking. Keep the conversation going by taking a turn saying something else about the topic.	*"Yeah, we can have monkeys. I like the snakes, because they're scary."*
If you don't understand what someone said you can ask a question.	*"Do you like scary things?"* *"I only like them when they're locked up."*
Let the other person know that you are leaving the conversation.	*"I'm leaving now. I'm going to paint a picture now."*

You probably know both children (and even adults) who find it hard to follow these rules. It can be very difficult to give someone else a turn to talk or resist the urge to interrupt. Helping children learn to be equal partners in conversations is a gradual process.

Try these suggestions.[1]

Teachers can engage children in one-on-one conversations during transitions, while completing chores such as washing paint brushes, or at the beginning or end of the day when it's easier to provide undivided attention. By talking with children, teachers can model conversation rules. Here are some suggestions for beginning a conversation.

Join in children's play so you will both have something to talk about. "I like green peppers on my pizza. What do you like on yours?"

Say something interesting that invites children to respond. "The prism hanging in the window is making rainbows on our floor."

Ask an open-ended question that narrows the topic. Some open-ended questions are so broad, children have no idea how to respond. For example, ask, "What did the clowns do?" instead of "What did you see at the circus?"

Once you have begun a conversation with a child, use these strategies to keep it going.

Ask questions that encourage the child to provide more information. "Did your dog get sick after he ate your whole ice cream cone?"

Comment on what the child says, then ask a question to keep the conversation going. "Your plant is much taller than last week. What did you do to make it grow so fast?"

Ask for clarification when a message is unclear. You might say, "Could you repeat that, please?" "Tell me again what you did."

Redirect children back to the topic. "Can you finish telling me about what happened at the dentist?"

Help children expand their vocabularies and understanding of language.

In addition to helping children learn the rules of conversation, you can introduce new words and model standard use of language. Here are some suggestions.

Talk to children about how things feel, smell, taste, or sound. Because they use all their senses to learn, children tend to be aware of the sensory characteristics of objects. Encourage them to describe what they experience. "Yes, this rock feels smooth. Is it as smooth as ice?"

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[1] Based in part on Elaine Weitzman, *Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development in Early Childhood Settings* (Toronto: The Hanen Centre, 1992), pp. 121-135.

Ask open-ended questions that encourage creative thinking. "What could we use this for?" "What might happen if?" "What would you do . . . ?"

Name things. Describe toys and materials a child is using, something a child is wearing, or what a child is doing. "You are wearing bumpy corduroy pants today." "I see you're using all the yellow pegs first." "What a long road you made with the blocks!"

Use full and complete sentences that describe details. If a child asks where something is, rather than pointing and saying, "Over there," take time to say, "The markers are on the art shelf next to the drawing paper."

Use a soft tone of voice. A harsh voice makes children tense. A loud voice makes them talk louder and creates unnecessary noise in the room.

Teach categories as you talk to children. "That *color* is blue." "We're having apples today for snack. What *fruits* do you like?" "Here are some *farm animals*: a horse, a cow, and a pig."

Describe the specific characteristics of objects or actions. "Roll the *rubber* ball to me" rather than, "Roll it." "Put the *paint* brushes in the sink" rather than, "Put the brushes here." "Look at how *fast* Kris is riding the tricycle" rather than, "Look at Kris." "See how *high* the bird is flying—up to the *top* of the tree" rather than, "See the bird."

Take time to talk about feelings. Help a child who is upset to use words to express his or her feelings. Sometimes you have to provide the words. "I can see you're having a hard time waiting for your turn. It feels like your turn will never come, but it will."

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you draw on your observation notes from the previous activity to plan some strategies and activities for encouraging the listening and speaking skills of the same two children. You can use the suggestions in this learning activity and some of your own. The first step is to review your notes to identify each child's skills and needs. Then decide what strategies and activities you will try with each child. After implementing your plans for two weeks, report on the results. First read the example that follows.

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Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

(Example)

Child: *Nadia* **Age:** *4 years* **Date:** *March 10*

After reviewing your observations of this child, what language areas do you want to work on?

Nadia rarely starts conversations with other children. She speaks so quietly it's hard to hear her.

Nadia responds to questions with one word. She rarely asks questions. When she talks, it's with many short sentences.

What strategies and activities will you try?

I will use puppets with Nadia to try to get her to talk more. I will invite her to join a child with more advanced language skills in play and help them get started. I'll be sure she sits near me at mealtimes so that I can help her talk to other children.

I will help Nadia learn about conversation. I can describe what she is doing, extend her sentences, show interest in what she has to say, and respond to her comments in ways that encourage her to say more. Nadia usually arrives early, so I'll use those times for one-on-one conversations.

What results do you notice after trying out your strategies/activities for two weeks?

The puppets were a big success. I was able to involve another child, and Nadia started talking to her. I saw the two children playing together several times.

Nadia and I have had more frequent conversations. She often seeks me out when she arrives in the morning. It's still hard to hear Nadia. When she is more comfortable using language, I will help her learn to speak louder.

Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

Child #1 : ______________ **Age:** __________ **Date:** __________

After reviewing your observations of this child, what language areas do you want to work on?

What strategies and activities will you try?

What results do you notice after trying out your strategies/activities for two weeks?

Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

Child #2 : ______________________ **Age:** ______________ **Date:** ___________

After reviewing your observations of this child, what language areas do you want to work on?

What strategies and activities will you try?

What results do you notice after trying out your strategies/activities for two weeks?

Discuss this activity with your trainer.

IV. Reading Books with Preschool Children[2]

In this activity you will learn to:

- Choose books that are appropriate for the children in your class
- Read to individuals and small groups of children

Children develop a love for reading when they are regularly read to and exposed to the power and pleasure of words. Teachers who genuinely enjoy reading, who like to tell stories, and who appreciate the rhythms and rhymes of poetry, can instill the same feelings in children. When you carefully hold a book while reading with a child, share a tidbit from a story to excite a child's interests, repeat a particularly appealing description because you like the way the words sound, and read a story with great enthusiasm and expression, you convey how wonderful you think books are.

Selecting Appropriate Books

Books written for preschool children can help them learn more about themselves and the world around them. When books depict familiar experiences—a new baby at home, making friends, starting a new school—children can better understand and deal with their feelings. When children discover that the experiences of characters in books are similar to their own, they seek out books for reassurance.

In selecting books for your classroom, seek ones that match children's skills and interests and depict their cultures, ethnic groups, families, and abilities in positive ways. Offer books in children's home languages and English.

Young preschool children like to identify with the characters in books.

Young preschool children (threes and early fours) are very centered on themselves, their families, their homes, and their friends. They like stories about characters with whom they can identify. Books that are appropriate for young preschoolers have the following characteristics:

- a simple plot about familiar experiences
- colorful and bold illustrations
- realistic illustrations that children can understand
- lots of repetition in the story

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[2] Based in part on Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd. Edition* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), pp. 221-234.

- happy endings that encourage a sense of security
- rhymes, nonsense words, repetition, and good language

Older preschool children are ready for more complex stories.

Older preschool children (fours and fives) tend to enjoy books with more complex plots. They can sit for a longer period of time and appreciate humorous and imaginative characters and events. Books that are appropriate for older children have the following characteristics:

- a plot they can follow
- humorous characters and events, and perhaps a surprise ending
- imaginative stories
- stories that extend their understanding of the world around them
- colorful, detailed illustrations

Offer children many different kinds of books.

Provide five to eight books per child in your class. Offer an inventory that includes books from categories such as the following:

- everyday life (for example, making pancakes)
- self-awareness (what makes each of us a unique person)
- simple, predictable text with lots of repetition (so children can "read" to themselves)
- real experiences, feelings, and problems (for example, adjusting to a new baby)
- wordless (pictures tell the story)
- big books (enlarged versions of popular books)
- non-fiction books tied to current themes and interests (buildings, dinosaurs, trains)
- poems, rhymes, fingerplays, and songs
- basic concepts (counting, alphabet, opposites)
- references (simple dictionary, nature guides, software manuals, cookbooks)
- nonsense and fantasy (silly words, characters, and stories)

It is important to vary the selection of books throughout the year. Always include some familiar books, while adding new ones that respond to children's growing skills and changing interests. You can also add books to different interest areas to reflect and extend current themes and activities.

Use the library as a resource when selecting books.

The children's librarian at your local library can be an excellent resource on choosing appropriate books for preschoolers. If you describe the children's skills and interests, the librarian can direct you to books that are just right for your group. While at the library, look for books that were nominated for or won awards such as the Caldecott medal for picture books. Also, review book lists from the American Library Association and the International Reading Association. Your library may carry journals that publish reviews of new children's books, such as *The Horn Book*.

Setting Up a Library Area

Every preschool room should have a library area—a place where children can sit comfortably while exploring many different kinds of books. The best location is a quiet corner, away from noisy activities such as blocks and the house corner.

Try these suggestions for creating a library area.

Make it soft and comfortable. Put a rug on the floor, as well as some large pillows. Include an overstuffed bean-bag or rocking chair. Use a mattress covered with attractive and cheerful fabric.

Include a table and two or three chairs. Provide for children who like to sit at a table to look at books. Cover the table with a colorful cloth and decorate with a small plant.

Display books attractively. Use a shelf that allows books to stand alone with covers in view. Keep books in good repair—not torn or marked up. Preserve the attractive covers on new books using clear Contact paper.

Decorate the area. Hang book covers and posters. Display photographs of children and adults reading books. Create a display related to a favorite book.

Provide good lighting. Locate the area near a window so natural light is available. Provide a standing lamp or ceiling fixture if additional light is needed.

Invite children to help repair damaged books.

As with other materials in your classroom, well-loved books can wear out. Keep in mind that worn-out books signify that children are learning to love books and reading. If you pay too much attention to keeping books in new condition, some of the more active children in your class may be discouraged from reading.

On the other hand, you do want to encourage children to take care of books. Ask the children to help you set a few simple rules such as "Write on paper, not in books" and post them in the library area. Offer frequent reminders to help children remember how to treat books. Point out how you take care of books. "I'd love to read to you. First, I have to wash the paint off my hands. I don't want to get paint on the book."

Remove damaged books so they can be repaired. If pages are missing, there is little you can do; however, you can erase pencil marks and tape torn pages or covers. You can create a book repair kit in a shoe box or basket stocked with items such as transparent and cloth tape, erasers, correction fluid to cover ink and crayon marks, and scissors. Involve the children in helping you fix the books. Older preschool children will soon learn to fix books on their own. Younger children will be more likely to report "hurt" books and ask for your help.

Encourage reading in all interest areas.

As adults, we rely on books and other printed materials for many different reasons—to look up a recipe, answer a question, explore a special interest. Children learn about the many different purposes for reading when teachers include books and other reading matter in all interest areas and outdoors. Here are some examples of the kinds of reading materials children could use in different areas:

- **Blocks**: books about buildings, farms, and bridges
- **House Corner**: magazines, catalogs, and junk mail
- **Art**: books about famous artists and artwork
- **Music and Movement**: song books
- **Cooking**: cookbooks and recipe cards
- **Computers**: software manuals and books made by children
- **Outdoors**: a basket of books to look at while sitting on the grass

Reading with Children

Reading aloud to children helps them discover that reading is an enjoyable activity. They begin to understand the connection between spoken and written words, and they gain meaning from the words and story. When teachers take time to read to a group of children, they bring children together for a meaningful social experience. Children often react to the story and comment on a picture or what is happening. Sometimes they will correct you if you miss a word or leave something out of a familiar story. The ability to remember the words in a story is an important step in the process of learning to read.

During choice time, you may see some children looking at a familiar book and telling the story to themselves. They may not know the meaning of all the words on the page, but they will probably demonstrate their understanding of several reading principles: books are read from front to back; the words on each page are read from left to right and top to bottom; words and pictures tell a story.

Individualize reading times to meet children's needs.

Teachers can read during a scheduled story time as well as in response to children's requests throughout the day. You might read to two children in the library area, a small group seated under a shady tree outdoors, one child curled up with you in the easy chair, or a group of ten gathered around your chair. Young children can generally listen to a story for five to ten minutes. Older children can listen a little longer—between ten and fifteen minutes. Some children find it difficult to sit for a group story time of any length. Allow them to leave and find something else to do if they lose interest in the story. Later, you can read to the child one-on-one. Reading to one or two children at a time allows you to gear the story to their special needs and interests and share a special time of closeness. As children grow older, they will remember these times, and continue to associate reading with feelings of warmth and security.

Prepare for small group story times.

Begin by carefully selecting the books you will read. Use the criteria suggested in this module and consider the interests and abilities of your group. If children particularly enjoy a book, read it again. If you plan to introduce a new story, read it to yourself several times so you can become very familiar with the words, characters, and plot. As you think about the children's possible reactions to the book, consider the following questions:

- How long will it take to read? Can the children sit for that length of time?
- Can the children join in to repeat phrases or answer questions?
- Will any concepts or ideas be unfamiliar to the children? How can I explain them?
- Do the illustrations have tiny details or hidden surprises to point out to the children?
- How can I make sound effects (e.g., animal noises or sirens) part of the story?
- How can I vary my voice for the different characters?
- What props (e.g., hats or musical instruments) could enhance the story?

Introduce the story to capture children's interests.

The first step in reading a story is to gain the attention of a group of children and help them focus on the book. You want to give them a reason to listen. Here are some suggestions:

Explain how the story is tied to familiar feelings or a recent experience. "We all have angry feelings sometimes. If there's no room on the swings, or we can't find our shoes, we may feel angry. So I thought I'd read a book about feeling angry. It's called, *I Was So Mad!*"

Discuss the cover of the book or the first illustration. "What do you think these two girls are talking about?"

Share an object that is an important part of the story. "Here's a nice round stone I found outside. Do you think we could make soup from this stone? Let's see what happens in this book called *Stone Soup*."

Relate a new book to a familiar one. "Do you remember reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*? This book is by the same author. It's called *The Very Lonely Firefly*."

Make story time an enjoyable experience.

Varying your reading style will engage children's attention and hold their interest. Here are some suggestions:

- Make sure the children are comfortably seated where they can see the pictures.
- Start as soon as you have the children's attention.
- Hold the book to one side so the children can see the pictures.
- Make the characters and experiences come alive by changing your voice and facial expressions.
- Stop to talk about the pictures, answer questions, discuss what might happen next, and think about what the characters might be feeling.
- Change or paraphrase the words to help children understand the story.
- Invite children to join in with repetitive refrains and responses.

Plan ways to extend children's experiences with the book.

When you have finished reading the story, talk about the plot and characters and offer materials and activities that enhance children's enjoyment of the book. Here are some examples:

- Discuss what the characters did and ask the children to share their own experiences.

  "Have you ever felt like Andrew did? Did people not listen to you when you had something important to say to them?"

  "It was really hard for Frances when it was her sister's birthday. Did you ever feel like Frances?"
- Provide props so children can act out the story.
- Make flannel board cutouts of favorite stories so children can retell the story themselves.
- Display the books you have read prominently so children can enjoy them again and again.

Make sure every child has reading materials at home.

The more children are read to, the more likely they are to learn to love reading. Even the most busy parents need to find time to read regularly to their children. You might allow children to borrow books overnight or for a few days. Provide information to all families about your local library—hours of service, special programs, and lists of good books for preschoolers. Invite the children's librarian to a parent meeting to share tips for reading with children. Sponsor a book fair so families can trade used books or buy new ones. In short, do whatever you can to support family reading times.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you select two books you think are appropriate for the children in your classroom. Choose books from your classroom inventory or borrow them from your library. Read one book to a small group of children and read the other to an individual child. Then answer the questions about your reading experiences on the blank forms. Begin by reviewing the examples that follow.

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Reading to a Small Group

(Example)

Title and author: Everybody Cooks Rice *by Norah Dooley* **Date:** *September 20*

Children (ages): *Leon, Dontae, Shiho, Zuri (4 and 5 years)* **Setting:** *Outdoors under a tree*

Briefly describe this book and why you selected it.

This book is about a girl who learns that her neighbors, who come from various cultures, have something in common—they all eat rice. However, they do things in unique ways, and cook different rice dishes. The children in our class represent several cultures, so I think they will like this book. Also, we have just set up a cooking area.

How did you prepare for reading this book?

I read the book several times and thought of questions to ask the children. I brought in some pictures of rice dishes.

What happened when you read the book?

There were many interruptions as children recognized the rice dishes they eat at home. They added more information than was in the book. They weren't very interested in the pictures I brought in.

How did you extend children's enjoyment of this book?

I asked parents to share simple recipes for their own favorite rice dishes. We made several dishes in the cooking area. I put the book in the cooking area so children could explore it on their own.

Reading to an Individual Child

(Example)

Title and author: Owl Babies *by Martin Waddell* **Date:** *September 23*

Child: *Nigel* **Age:** *3 years, 2 months* **Setting:** *Seated in the rocking chair in the library area*

Briefly describe this book and why you selected it.

This book is about three baby owls who wake up to find their mother gone. When she returns, they are very happy to see her. I chose this book because Nigel has been having a hard time saying good-bye to his mother each day.

How did you prepare for reading this book?

I read the book several times and thought about questions I could ask Nigel to help him handle his own feelings about separating from his mother.

What happened when you read the book?

The first time I read the book Nigel was very quiet. At the end of the book I asked him if he would like me to read it again. He said, "Yes," so I did. This time I stopped at key points to invite Nigel to talk about what was happening in the story.

How did you extend the child's enjoyment of this book?

I asked Nigel's mother to make a tape of herself reading this book. I provided the blank tape, book, and tape recorder. Now Nigel can listen to the story on his own.

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Reading to a Small Group

Title and author: ______________________ **Date:** ______________________

Children (ages): ______________________ **Setting:** ______________________

Briefly describe this book and why you selected it.

How did you prepare for reading this book?

What happened when you read the book?

How did you extend children's enjoyment of this book?

Reading to an Individual Child

Title and author: ______________________ **Date:** ______________________

Child: ______________ **Age:** ________ **Setting:** ______________________

Briefly describe this book and why you selected it.

How did you prepare for reading this book?

What happened when you read the book?

How did you extend the child's enjoyment of this book?

Discuss this learning activity with your trainer.

V. Supporting Emerging Literacy Skills

In this activity, you will learn to:

- Identify the skills and understandings that are part of emerging literacy
- Create an environment that supports emerging literacy

Most people would agree that children begin learning to listen and speak long before they talk in sentences. But if you ask people when children learn to read and write, they often say "in first grade." In fact, learning to read and to write starts in infancy as children are naturally exposed to spoken and written language and to books and other reading materials. Speaking, reading, and writing are related parts of literacy learning. Young children develop reading and writing skills at the same time. Many two- and three-year-olds can identify the familiar signs, labels, and logos they see at home and in the community. They also experiment with writing by making scribbles that are similar to the writing of parents and other adults. The gradual, ongoing process through which children learn to listen, speak, read, and write is called emerging literacy.

Young children construct their own knowledge about reading and writing. They figure out for themselves: "What is the difference between drawing and writing?" "What does it mean when my teacher uses a different tone of voice?" "What do the symbols in books have to do with the words that people say out loud?" Adults encourage children's emerging literacy by regularly exposing them to literacy activities at home and at the program. Children learn about the purposes of written language when they see adults reading (books, charts, a bulletin board) and writing (shopping lists, notes, recording a child's description of a painting).

The Foundation for Reading

Children who have been read to regularly in their early years and who are given a rich assortment of good books to look at are more likely to want to read to themselves. Children develop many important understandings by being exposed to books throughout the preschool years.

- They learn that books have a beginning and end and that (in English and many other languages) the words on each page are read from left to right and top to bottom.
- They learn that the print on the page represents spoken words. If the events and ideas in stories are relevant to children's life experiences, they will understand what they hear.
- They learn that reading books is an enjoyable and satisfying activity. This discovery encourages a positive attitude toward reading.

There are predictable stages in learning to read.

As in all areas of development, children go through predictable stages in understanding what reading is all about. Knowing about these stages will help you to recognize typical behaviors and encourage children's development. These stages are described below.[3]

Exploring books. Children imitate what older siblings and adults do while reading. They turn pages while retelling a familiar story. Children may ask to have a favorite book read again and again. They feel a sense of mastery when they know the story so well they can retell it. Predictable stories and those with repeated refrains are particularly useful in helping children remember what will happen next.

Understanding sequence. Children gradually learn that stories have a beginning, middle, and end. The more children are exposed to books and encouraged to retell stories, the more they can recall the details and correct sequence of events.

Recognizing that written words are symbols. Before children reach this stage they may ask you to read a page with no print or cover up the print on a page while asking you to read. More experienced children will say things such as, "Now you can start reading again," when you get back to a page with print on it. They realize that printed words function differently from pictures and that words stand for people, objects, and ideas.

Matching words with the printed text. At this stage, children may run their fingers along the text as you read. They may also point to individual words, though not necessarily the ones you are reading. This behavior tells you that the child is beginning to understand that each set of letters represents a word.

Recognizing printed words. Children at this stage are likely to ask questions about the print on the page. They may ask, "What does this say?" or "Where does it say that?" You may notice these children starting to pick out printed words in the classroom or while on neighborhood walks. They are developing a "sight vocabulary" as they learn to recognize signs, their own names, and sometimes the names of other children in the class.

The Foundation for Writing

Children learn to write by writing. They practice writing long before they can make recognizable letters or numbers. Using pencils, pens, crayons, and other writing tools, they imitate adult writing. If you make a shopping list, a three-year-old may make one. If you write a letter, a four-year-old may decide that he or she needs to write one, too. Just as in learning to read, children go through predictable stages in writing. These stages are described on the next page.

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[3] Based on Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd. Edition* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), p. 227.

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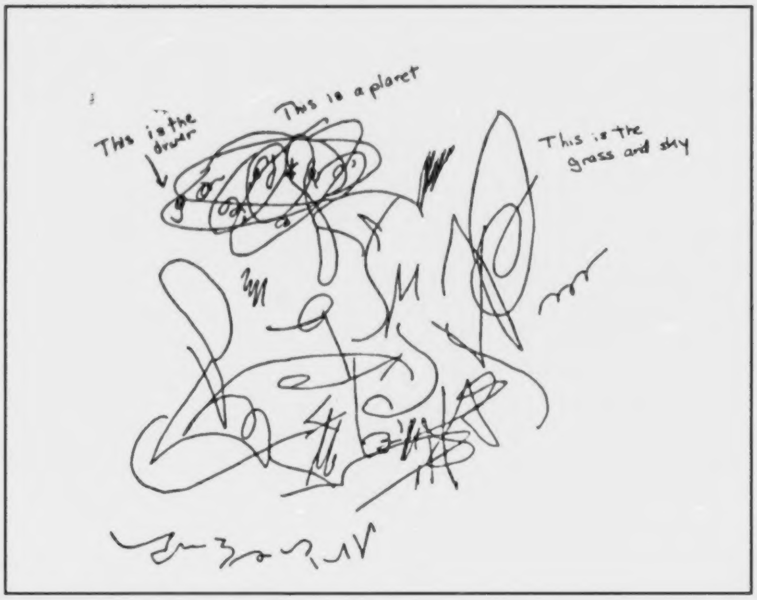


The stages in learning to write are also predictable.

Writing scribbles. At first, young children imitate adult writing by scribbling. If you look closely, you will see that they can distinguish between drawing and writing. In the drawing above, which demonstrates this distinction, the child's writing is at the bottom left of the picture.

Making recognizable letters. As children gain more experience with writing, they begin making actual letters. These letters may be a part of a series of marks, some of which are not letters at all.

Organizing writing on the page. Children begin to realize that there are standard rules for how to place letters and words on the page. Rather than placing marks haphazardly, they recognize that, like the words on a page in a book, writing goes from left to right and there are spaces between words.

Connecting speech and writing. As children begin to recognize individual letters, they also learn that each letter represents a sound. At this stage they may begin writing words and making up their own spelling—for example, "kt" for "cat." There is no need to correct children's invented spelling; it is an important step in their understanding of reading and writing. Ask the child to read to you what he or she has written. You will soon understand the writing system the child has devised.

At each of these stages, children need small muscle skills to hold and manipulate writing tools. They can strengthen these muscles while enjoying a variety of materials and activities such as, rolling playdough, stirring raisins into muffin batter, buttoning and zipping, building with Legos, and using a computer keyboard.

Creating a Print-Rich Environment

Children's emerging literacy skills will develop naturally in a print-rich environment—one filled with books and written words that have meaning and are displayed at children's eye-level. As children see the many uses for print and have many opportunities to explore reading and writing materials, their own skills and understandings will grow. In addition to creating an appealing library area, there are many ways to expose children to the uses of print.

Use signs, labels, and charts as a way to share important information. Teachers can help children learn about the importance of print by using it to communicate in English and the children's home languages. Ask children to help you make print and picture labels for shelves and containers to show were materials belong. Label individual cubbies with children's names, and perhaps a photograph. Post picture and written versions of the daily schedule. Make helper, daily attendance, and birthday charts. Make signs for each interest area telling how many children can use it at a time and listing a few, simple rules. Create a system for taking turns with popular materials, by posting a piece of paper and a marker attached with a string. Children can write their names and cross them off after their turn.

Expose children to many different ways we use print.

Make experience charts with children. Ask children to describe what happened after a trip or a shared group experience. Write a story by recording their comments on a large piece of paper. As you and the children read the story aloud, point to the words and move your finger along each line. Post the finished story in the room.

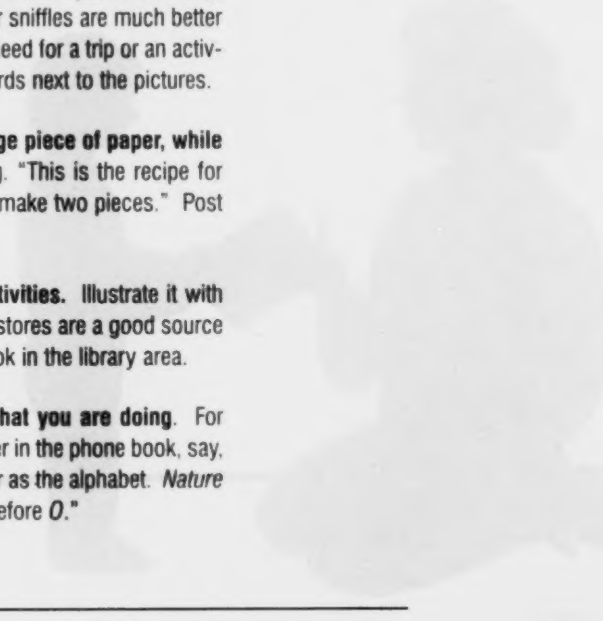
Point out words in the environment. On a neighborhood walk, show children traffic signs and explain what they mean. Read aloud the signs posted in store windows and on the sides of buses and other vehicles.

Do your writing where children can see you and tell them what you are writing. "I'm writing this note to your dad to let him know that your sniffles are much better today." Ask children to help you make a list of things you need for a trip or an activity. They can draw what you need while you write the words next to the pictures.

Write a recipe or the steps in a simple activity on a large piece of paper, while children are watching. Talk about what you are writing. "This is the recipe for English muffin pizzas. First, we pull the muffins apart to make two pieces." Post the paper in the appropriate interest area.

Invite children to help you write a book about their activities. Illustrate it with photographs and bind the pages together. (Office supply stores are a good source for inexpensive but strong bindings.) Put the finished book in the library area.

Model using print to get information and talk about what you are doing. For example, while looking up the number for the Nature Center in the phone book, say, "The names in the phone book are listed in the same order as the alphabet. *Nature* starts with an *N*, so I'm going to look for it after *M* and before *O*."



Include games and materials with words and numbers. Children can learn about words and numbers while playing Lotto, matching games, and number games that have words and numbers as well as pictures.

Include opportunities for writing as a part of children's play.

If you provide markers, pencils, and crayons with plain drawing paper in all interest areas, children can incorporate writing in their play and activities. Items such as magazines, telephone books, and pads and pencils can be placed in the dramatic play area. Add props related to real-life activities along with reading and writing materials. For example, if playing doctor is a favorite theme, provide prescription pads, an eye examination chart, magazines for the waiting room, and office supplies for the receptionist. In the block area, provide a basket filled with index cards, markers, and masking tape so children can make signs for their buildings. Include props that have writing on them, such as wooden traffic signs.

Establish a writing center in or near the library.

Children will make good use of a writing center filled with the materials needed to write signs, stories, letters, cards, and messages. If space allows, locate the area near the library area to take advantage of the related nature of reading and writing. Furnishings for the writing center might include a desk or table and chairs, a shelf, and a bulletin board. The following materials can be included.

Tools for writing:

pencils (thick lead; colored)

chalk (white and colored)

markers (washable, non-toxic)

crayons

Surfaces to write on:

paper (lined and unlined, white and colored, different sizes, weights)

chalkboards

ready-made blank books

index cards

cardboard

magic slates with pencils

Miscellaneous materials:

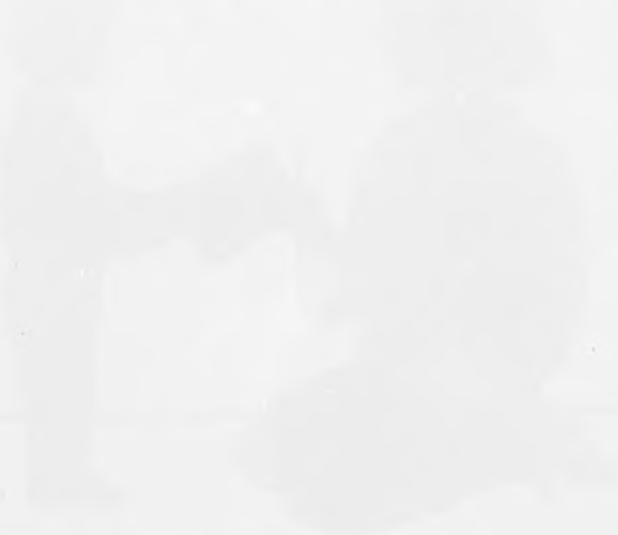
- junk mail
- catalogs
- magazines
- erasers
- clipboards
- paste and glue
- stickers
- stapler
- yarn
- typewriter
- computer and software
- envelopes
- blunt-edge scissors
- file folders
- hole punch
- cardboard mailbox

A child's first exposure to print usually occurs within the home setting. Parents can continue to play a central role in promoting literacy. When your program receives donations of paper, pencils, crayons, or markers, share them with the families. If necessary, ask your director if it is possible to include money in the budget to purchase writing materials for children to use at home.

Make sure every child has writing materials at home.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you observe a child's emerging reading and writing skills. Next, you complete a chart noting the materials in your environment that encourage children's emerging literacy and determine what items you want to add.



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Emerging Literacy Skills

(Example)

Child: *Jennifer* **Age:** *4-1/2 years* **Date:** *June 1*

What emerging literacy skills did you observe this child using?

While looking at books:

With familiar books, she likes to turn the pages and tell herself the story. She occasionally goes to the library area and looks at favorite books. Sometimes she tells the story to another child.

When listening to a story:

When the teacher is reading a familiar story, Jennifer frequently corrects her if the text is not read exactly. She pointed to a page with no text on it and said, "There's no talking on this page."

During an activity or routine:

When she set the table for lunch she read each child's name aloud as she put the place mats down. When playing restaurant with several other children she asked the customers what they wanted and pretended to write down their requests using her finger and her hand.

While using writing tools (crayons, markers, pencils, paint brushes):

She writes her name correctly. In the block area, she likes to make signs for her buildings. She will ask a teacher to write down what she wants to say, and then she likes to copy it herself. Sometimes she adds letters to her paintings.

How you can you encourage this child's emerging literacy skills?

I can ask her to read a familiar story to me and encourage her efforts. I can add writing materials to the dramatic play area to support the restaurant play theme. I can ask her to tell me about the letters she adds to her paintings and write down her descriptions of the paintings, if she likes.

Emerging Literacy Skills

Child: ____________________ **Age:** ____________ **Date:** ________________

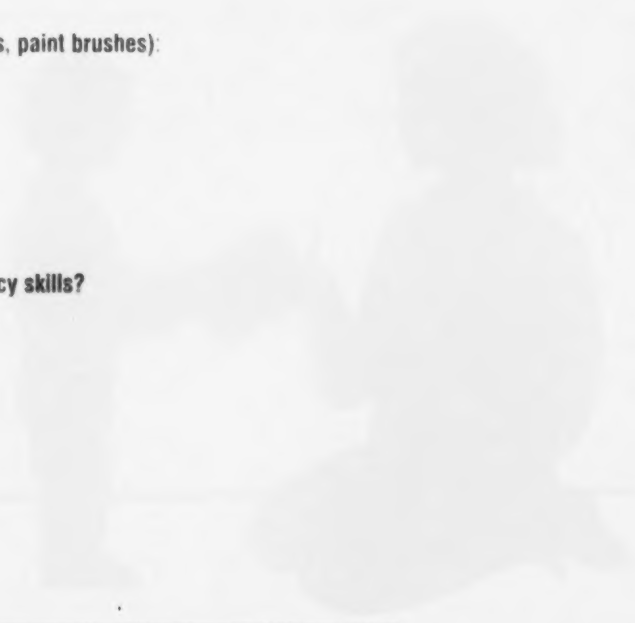
What emerging literacy skills did you observe this child using?

While looking at books:

When listening to a story:

During an activity or routine:

While using writing tools (crayons, markers, pencils, paint brushes):



How you can you encourage this child's emerging literacy skills?

How Does the Environment Encourage Emerging Literacy?

After each example, list ways that your indoor environment encourages children's emerging literacy skills.

Signs, Labels, and Charts

Picture and written versions of the daily schedule

The Many Ways to Use Print

A photograph of the winner of a pet show, with the caption

Opportunities to Write While Playing

A grocery store dramatic play kit with props featuring print and materials for writing

Games and Materials with Words and Numbers

Alphabet lotto

Writing Center

Junk mail

Review your chart, then list five new ways to support emerging literacy skills. Make the changes, observe children's reactions, and summarize what you saw and heard.

1.

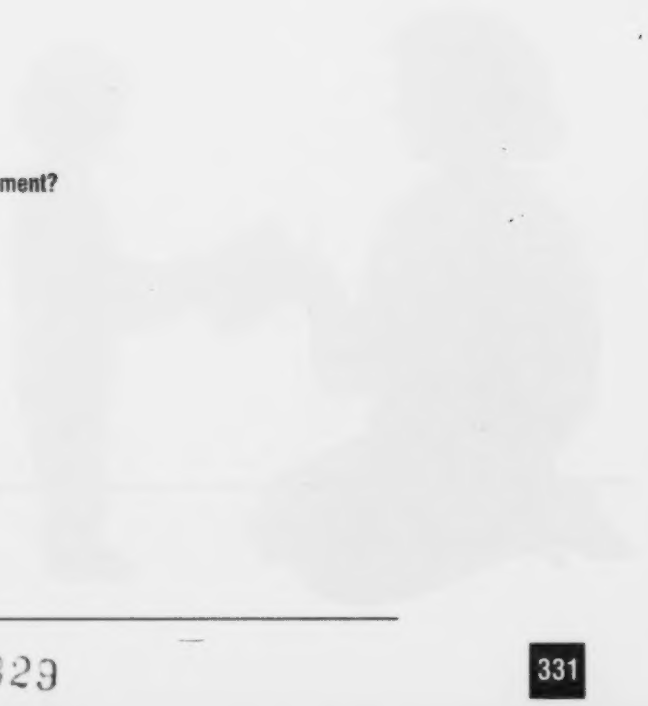
2.

3.

4.

5.

How did the children react to the changes in the environment?



Discuss this learning activity with your trainer

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills in promoting preschoolers' communication.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Language Skills, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about promoting children's language skills while you were working on this module.

- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 287-289)

Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak

1. **How did Ms. Kim know what Jerry wanted?**
   a. *She interpreted his nonverbal communications—tapping her shoulder, pointing to the block corner, nodding, leading her there.*

   b. *She went with him to the block corner and asked questions about what had happened.*

2. **How did Ms. Kim help Jerry use words to express his feelings and thoughts?**
   a. *She stated what she thought he meant by his nonverbal gestures.*

   b. *She told him what to say to David.*

   c. *She respected his desire to make his own garage.*

   d. *She repeated what he said using a complete sentence.*

Helping Children Use Language in Meaningful Ways

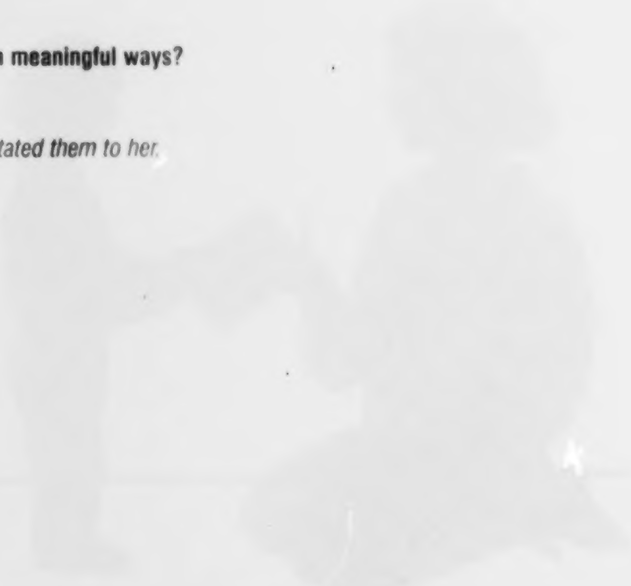
1. **Why did Mr. Lopez suggest that the children write a story?**
   a. *They had a lot to say when he asked them about their walk.*

   b. *They seemed excited about their experience.*

2. **How did Ms. Nolan help the children use language in meaningful ways?**
   a. *She asked what their story said.*

   b. *She offered to write down their words as they dictated them to her.*

   c. *After recording their words, she read them aloud.*



Providing Materials and Opportunities that Support Emerging Literacy Skills

1. **What did Ms. Williams do to interest the children in hearing the story?**
   a. *She reminded children that they were familiar with the story.*

   b. *She introduced the story and asked questions to help children recall the plot.*

   c. *She showed the children the cover of the book.*

   d. *She let the children share what they remembered about the story before she began reading.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams use the group story time to support children's emerging literacy skills?**
   a. *She read the story with lots of expression to enhance children's enjoyment of the story.*

   b. *She paused frequently to let the children recite familiar phrases.*

   c. *She asked a motivating question before starting to read.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Communication Skills

(p. 297)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Communication Skills
They use language to think, learn, imagine, plan, make requests, direct others, and solve problems.	*Plan activities and provide materials in each interest area that allow children to use language for different purposes. Talk and listen to children and encourage them to talk and listen to each other. Expect that the classroom will be filled with children's voices.*
They tell stories about imaginary and real experiences that take place in the past as well as in the present.	*Offer to write children's stories to be hung on the wall at their eye level, or in books that children can illustrate. Invite children to act out their stories for others. Ask questions to help children tell stories with a beginning, middle, and end.*
They participate and take turns in conversations with peers and adults.	*Use mealtimes as opportunities to model and directly teach the rules followed in polite conversation, such as talking one at a time, responding to what was said, staying on the topic. Talk with individual children about topics of interest to them.*
They make up and act out scenarios with plots and different characters who solve a problem or do something specific.	*Provide props, dress-up clothes, and accessories that stimulate children's imaginations. Observe children's play and offer new materials that will encourage them to expand their play or take it in a different direction.*
They can retell favorite stories, sometimes in correct sequence.	*Read favorite stories often, and plan activities that build on the story's characters or plot.*
They ask many questions and can answer open-ended questions that have no right or wrong response.	*Answer children's questions directly, or let them help you find the answer by using a book or other resource. Ask questions about what children are doing to engage them in conversation.*

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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Communication Skills

(p. 298)

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Communication Skills**
They learn most rules of grammar without direct instruction. They may make mistakes because there are exceptions to a rule.	*Accept children's use of language without pointing out mistakes. In your response, restate children's words using standard language. Serve as a model for standard use of language.*
They may be learning one language at home and another at the program.	*Learn a few useful phrases in the children's home languages. Make labels and signs in both English and children's home languages. Provide books and other print materials in the home languages. Ask parents to help you include their home language in your materials and activities.*
They are learning that printed words are symbols for spoken words and convey messages.	*Print and post signs, job charts, bulletin boards, and stories to provide important information. Label cubbies, containers, shelves, and interest areas. On a neighborhood walk, point out traffic signs and signs on buildings. Offer writing materials in a separate area and in all interest areas.*
They scribble and write invented letters and words.	*Ask children to read what they have written so you can understand what they know about writing. Accept their writing without pointing out mistakes or making corrections.*
They like a wide variety of books.	*Offer a variety of fiction and nonfiction books in English and children's home languages that are appropriate to the children in your group. Include books about familiar characters and experiences and books that introduce new people, places, and ideas. Offer poetry, alphabet, and counting books and simple dictionaries in English and children's home languages.*
They can memorize songs, poems, rhymes, and books with repetition.	*Read books with repeated words and phrases again and again, until children know what comes next and join in. Ask parents to share their favorite poems, songs, and rhymes. Make up songs and rhymes about the children and classroom life.*

Glossary

Communication

The act of expressing and sharing ideas, desires, and feelings.

Conventional reading and writing

Reading and writing that follows accepted standard rules for language use.

Emerging literacy

The developmental process through which children gain listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Language

A system of words with rules for their use in speaking, reading, and writing.

Nonverbal communication

The act of conveying feelings or ideas through gestures and body language.

Predictable books

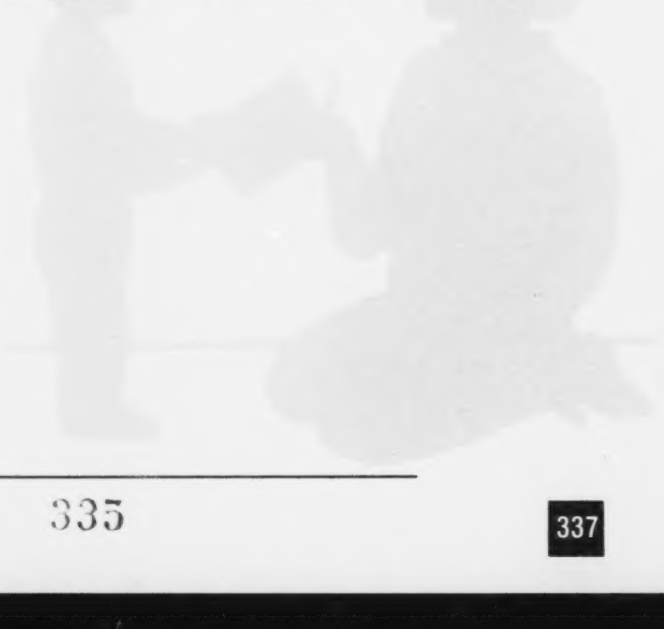
Those with plots that allow children to guess correctly what happens next.

Repetitive books

Those that repeat certain words and phrases.

Standard language

The form of any language that is usually taught in an educational setting, and follows specific rules for speech and writing. There are many forms of a language (dialects) other than the standard spoken and written forms.



Notes

Teaching Strategies, Inc., strives to improve the quality of early childhood programs by producing comprehensive and practical curriculum and training materials. Our products and staff development services are making a difference in elementary schools, Head Start, and child care programs worldwide.

Curriculum Resources

***The Creative Curriculum® for Early Childhood,* 3rd Edition.** Shows how teachers build curriculum for preschool and kindergarten children around the environment using ten interest areas: Blocks, House Corner, Table Toys, Art, Sand and Water, Library, Music and Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors. #PS10071, $39.95. *Now available in Spanish*—#PS1074, $39.95

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***The Creative Curriculum®*.** A 37-minute, award-winning videotape that shows how children learn in each interest area and how teachers set the stage and encourage their learning. #PS10072, $99.50. *Now available with Spanish subtitles*—#PS10014, $99.50

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Trainer's Guides*.** Each of the "Caring for . . .***" sets has a *Trainer's Guide* that offers suggestions for implementing the program and providing feedback to staff. They include knowledge and competency assessments, and forms for planning, observing, and tracking progress.

For more information, call (800) 637-3652 or (202) 362-7543, email at TSI7543@aol.com, or write P.O. Box 42243, Washington, DC, 20015.

Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Ed.

A Competency-Based Training Program

Volume I

Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Edition, is a comprehensive, competency-based training program designed for teachers who work with children ages three to five. The two-volume set is divided into modules that correspond to the 13 functional areas of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards. The modules include readings and learning activities that help build skills and knowledge as staff work with children daily. This new, expanded Second Edition, completely redesigned and updated, is practical and easy to use. Information is easier to locate, and the content has been enhanced to reflect the newest knowledge about children and changing family and social trends. The set is a valuable resource for teachers seeking CDA certification through The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.

Included in Volume I are Six modules:

1. **Safe:** Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries; planning for and responding to accidents and injuries; helping children develop habits that reduce and prevent accidents and injuries.
2. **Healthy:** Maintaining indoor and outdoor environments that promote wellness and reduce the spread of disease; helping children develop habits that promote good hygiene and nutrition; recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect.
3. **Learning Environment:** Organizing indoor and outdoor areas that encourage play and exploration; selecting and attractively displaying materials and equipment; planning and implementing a schedule, routines, and transitions that meet children's needs.
4. **Physical:** Providing materials, equipment, and opportunities for gross motor development; providing materials and opportunities for fine motor development; reinforcing and encouraging children's physical fitness.
5. **Cognitive:** Creating an environment that encourages children to explore and discover; interacting with children in ways that help them develop confidence in their ability to think and solve problems; providing opportunities for children to construct knowledge about their world.
6. **Communication:** Encouraging children to listen and speak; helping children use language in meaningful ways; providing materials and experiences that support emerging literacy skills.

The modules in **Volume II** address [illegible] remaining seven Functional areas of the CDA Competency Standards:

7. Creative
8. Self
9. Social
10. Guidance
11. Families
12. Program Management
13. Professionalism

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Caring for
Preschool Children

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Volume II
Second Edition

Creative

Self

Social

Guidance

Families

Program Management

Professionalism

Derry Gosselin Koralek
Diane Trister Dodge
Peter J. Pizzolongo

Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Ed.

A Competency-Based Training Program

Volume II

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TEACHING STRATEGIES
Washington, DC

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Since 1989, *Caring for Preschool Children* has been implemented in early childhood programs across the country and used as the text for college courses. It served as the basis for two new sets of materials—*Caring for Children in Family Child Care* and *Caring for Children in School-Age Programs.* Our experiences in developing the new materials led us to the decision to update this original work and publish a second edition.

We are especially grateful to Emily Kohn who edited the manuscript; Debra Al-Salám who served as production manager; Jennifer Barrett O'Connell who created the art work for our new cover and the graphics in each module; Ayesha Khwaja Husain who designed the cover and layout of the book and also assisted with production; and to Larry Bram who kept us all on track.

And finally, we want to acknowledge the many early childhood educators we have worked with over the years from whom we have learned a great deal. We have undoubtedly adapted and expanded on many of their excellent ideas; this training program is richer as a result.

It is our hope that this second edition of *Caring for Preschool Children* will have a positive impact on the quality of early childhood programs by giving staff developers and teachers a practical and comprehensive tool to support their important work.

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Overview

Promoting children's creativity involves:

- Arranging the environment to encourage exploration and experimentation
- Offering a variety of materials and activities that promote self-expression
- Interacting with children in ways that encourage and respect original ideas and expressions

Children who are creative are willing to try new ways of doing things. They see the possibility of playing a game or using an art material in more than one way. They are curious about how things work and why things happen as they do. They are willing to take risks. When they try something new and it doesn't work, they learn from their mistakes and try another approach.

There are many ways to define creativity.

The definitions of creativity are many and varied. Some say it is the **process** of creating, others say it is the **product** of creative efforts. According to Teresa Amabile, a social psychologist who has studied children's creativity, anything a child does or says can be considered creative if it meets two criteria.[1]

- The idea or activity must be **novel** or substantially different from some thing the child has seen or heard before.
- The idea or activity must be **appropriate** or useful in achieving a goal, and appealing or meaningful to the child in some way.

Thus, the cook who follows a recipe exactly is not using creativity; the cook who experiments with new ingredients is.

In defining creativity, it is also helpful to consider what it is **not**. Creativity is not the same as high intelligence. Many people of average intelligence are highly creative. Creativity is not the same as talent. Many talented people are skilled performers; however, they are not all creative. Creativity is not the same as being eccentric. Creative people often do things in different ways; however, this does not mean that something is wrong with them.

Children are naturally creative.

Everyone is born with the ability to be creative. Some children are more creative than others, and children express their creativity in different ways. Most preschool children are eager learners, naturally imaginative, and creative. They learn as they interact with people and objects in their environment. As children develop their motor and language skills, their play with one another becomes more inventive.

---

[1] Teresa Amabile, *Recognizing Children's Creativity* (NY: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1989), p. 25.

They make plans and carry them through. Their ideas may not always work and their answers may not always be "right." However, when children find that their ideas and creations are appreciated and valued, they gain confidence in their abilities.

Adults can nurture children's creativity.

The supportive relationships between children and adults are the foundation for nurturing creativity. When children feel secure, they are likely to explore and express themselves. Teachers encourage children's creativity by planning a daily schedule that allows children plenty of time to explore and play at their own pace. They organize the environment to encourage children to explore and experiment, and offer a variety of interesting, open-ended materials and activities. In addition, teachers promote creativity when they show respect for children's original ideas, thoughts, and expressions.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in promoting children's creativity. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheets at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

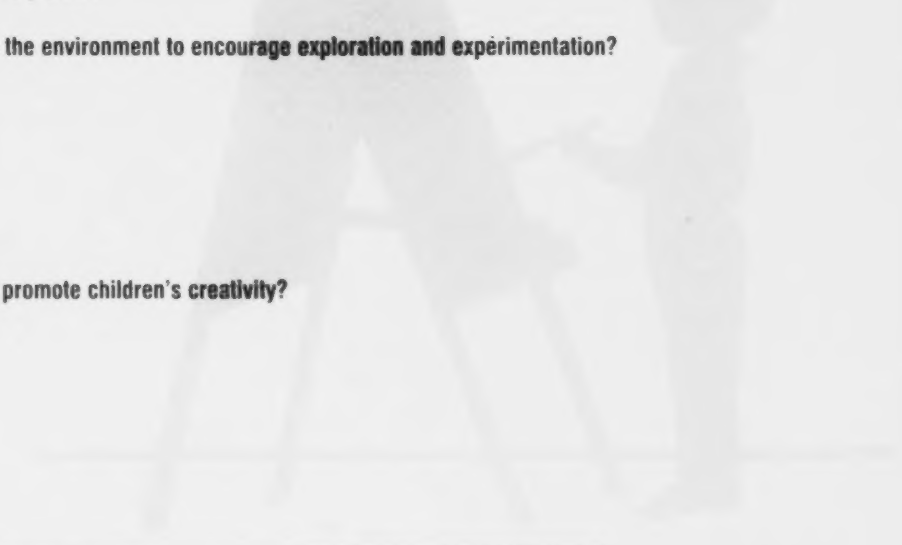
Arranging the Environment to Encourage Exploration and Experimentation

Display and store materials on low, open shelves so children can easily select and replace what they need without adult assistance.	"I see you found the new zoo animals in the block area. It looks like you're building a fence to separate the lions from the bears."
Set up the environment so children can spread out, explore, and be messy.	"Kyle and Tim, would you like me to help you move this big box into the library area so you can do your puppet show for an audience?"
Provide sufficient space to save creations that cannot be completed in one day so children can continue to make, use, and expand them.	"We'll save the store you and André made so you can play in it tomorrow."
Help children display their own creative work attractively and respectfully.	"Carlos, where would you like to hang your weaving project?"
Display interesting pictures and objects at a child's height on the wall and invite children to explore them.	"Jim, the dancing feather-fans your grandmother brought us are hanging on the wall in the music area. You and the others can get them when you want to use them."
Adapt the schedule, when appropriate, so children's creative work is not interrupted.	"Dion is still working hard on his painting. Let's start story time without him. He can join us when he's done."

Before the children arrive, Ms. Williams adds shoe boxes, oatmeal boxes, and wrapping-paper tubes to the art area. She makes sure there is plenty of school glue, paper fasteners, pipe cleaners, and twist ties, and puts some dryer lint she brought from home in the basket with the cotton balls, and yarn. She covers the empty table with butcher paper. Soon Kira arrives and retrieves her unfinished house from the shelf where it was stored. Ms. Williams asks, "What materials do you need?" Kira says, "I still have to make my puppy. I need some soft stuff." Ms. Williams shows Kira the cotton balls, dryer lint, and yarn, and says, "Yes, puppies have very soft fur."

1. **How did Ms. Williams arrange the environment to encourage exploration and experimentation?**

2. **How do open-ended materials promote children's creativity?**



Offering a Variety of Materials and Activities That Promote Self-Expression

Provide books, CDs or tapes, props, and art materials in response to children's current interests.	"Charnelle, I noticed you watching the birds at our feeder yesterday. Here's a book about birds. Maybe you can find some of our birds."
Offer a variety of materials, props, and objects that reflect the cultures and ethnic groups of all the children in the class.	"Indrani, your mom brought us some beautiful fabric and one of her saris from India. You can show your friend how to put on a sari."
Encourage children to use their imaginations through activities such as storytelling.	"The dragon ate three tons of mashed potatoes, two boxes of hot dogs, and a carrot. What do you think he ate next?"
Avoid using coloring books, product patterns, and dittos.	"The children can make anything they want with our woodworking supplies. We have wood scraps, nails and screws, glue, clamps, tools, and, of course, safety goggles."
Offer "messy" open-ended activities such as finger painting, bubble blowing, and water, sand, and mud play.	"Terrence, the designs you made on Aseem's face make him look really scary. Aseem, do you want to see yourself in the mirror?"
Provide materials children can use in many different ways such as blocks, musical instruments, art supplies, and dress-up clothes.	"Jacci and Anna, you're each using a different technique for rolling your clay. Jacci is using all her fingers and Anna is using her fists."

Ms. Vaughn, Emily, Maggie, and Tomás are making banana bread. As Maggie and Emily stir the flour, bananas, and eggs together, Ms. Vaughn asks, "What else do you want to put in this banana bread?" "Pineapple," says Maggie. "I like raisins," says Tomás. "Me, too," says Emily. "Let's add some raisins." "You all have some good ideas about what to put in, says Ms. Vaughn. "How about adding raisins this time and next time we can try another idea?" The children agree to add raisins this time. Maggie opens the jar of raisins and pours some in a measuring cup.

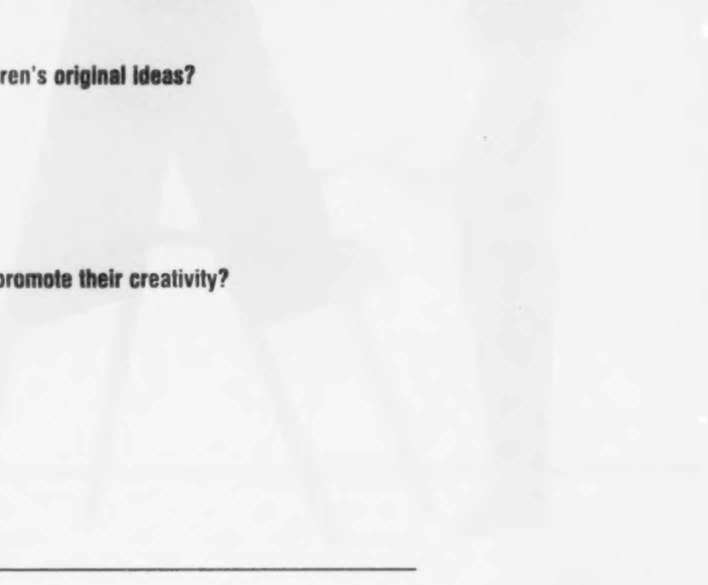
1. **Why are cooking activities good opportunities to promote creativity?**

2. **How did Ms. Vaughn encourage self-expression?**

Interacting With Children in Ways That Encourage and Respect Original Ideas and Expressions

Encourage children to express their ideas and feelings.	"That's an interesting idea, Paula. Bananas and pears might make a tasty fruit smoothie."
Extend children's dramatic play by assuming a "pretend" role.	"I need a haircut. Do I need an appointment or is this a 'walk-in' barber shop?"
Comment on children's creative thinking.	"Wow! You made a tunnel in the wet sand for your truck! How did you do that?"
Respect the creative process as well as the creative product.	"Lenny, you experimented by finger painting with your hands and then with your elbows."
Call attention to sensory experiences.	"How do the soap suds feel on your hands?"
Ask open-ended questions that encourage children to solve problems and think about things in new ways.	"Raoul, you're right, our tomato plants are falling over. How can we fix them?"
Accept and value each child's unique creative expression.	"After our field trip to the pet store, Jeremy made some snakes out of clay and Oanh Le painted a colorful picture of tropical fish."

When it's almost time to clean up, Ms. Kim walks over to the block area where Brian, Carlos, and Sabrina have been working. "That is the biggest house I ever saw," she says. "You must have worked hard building that." All three children ask, "Please, please, can we leave it up?" Ms. Kim smiles and says, "Yes, you may, but your building needs some protection. How can you let everyone else know that you are saving your building?" Carlos replies, "We can make a sign.'" "That's a good idea," says Ms. Kim. There are some markers, paper, and tape on the shelf." While helping Carlos make the sign, Ms. Kim continues, "Do you have any ideas about how we could remember this house for a long time?" "Take a picture!" says Sabrina. Ms. Kim laughs, "You children have lots of good ideas. Would you like to be in the picture, too? I'll go get the camera."



1. **How did Ms. Kim encourage and respect the children's original ideas?**

2. **How did Ms. Kim's interactions with the children promote their creativity?**

Your Own Creativity

Creative people are innovative and resourceful. They can take an idea, a plan, or an object and adapt it to make something new. Although some people are more creative than others, everyone has creative abilities they use on the job and at home. As adults, we sometimes confuse creativity with talent. Artists and musicians can be creative people—but so can cooks, plumbers, and teachers. However, you don't have to be able to paint a picture or write a book to be creative. Thinking of new ways to involve parents in planning a field trip, making up a song to sing at the end of the day, or rearranging your room to create an area for dancing and movement activities are all examples of ways you use your creativity.

Understanding your own creativity and how you approach problems and new situations will help you become sensitive to creativity in children. Think about the satisfaction you feel when you solve a problem while cooking, gardening, talking with a friend, or planning new activities. That feeling is similar to the pride children feel when they have figured something out for themselves. Here are some exercises you can do to help stimulate your own creative thinking.

Think of a time you felt really creative. What were you doing? What made it possible for you to be creative?

How many different ways could children use a collection of bottle caps?

Describe something you did with children that was creative.

Recognizing your creative abilities will enable you to help children develop their own creativity. Watching children gain self-confidence and enthusiastically explore their world can give you much satisfaction.

When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of the module if you need definitions of the terms used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills teachers use to promote children's creativity. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Arranging the Environment to Encourage Exploration and Experimentation

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Display and store materials on low open shelves so children can easily select and replace what they need without adult assistance.	☐	☐	☐
2. Set up the environment so children can spread out, explore, and be messy.	☐	☐	☐
3. Provide sufficient space to save creations that cannot be completed in one day so children can continue to make, use, and possibly expand them.	☐	☐	☐
4. Help children display their own creative work attractively and respectfully.	☐	☐	☐
5. Display interesting pictures and objects at a child's height on the wall and invite children to explore and enjoy them.	☐	☐	☐
6. Adapt the schedule, when appropriate, so children's creative work is not interrupted.	☐	☐	☐

Offering a Variety of Materials and Activities That Promote Self-Expression

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
7. Provide books, CDs or tapes, props, and art materials in response to children's current interests.	☐	☐	☐
8. Offer a variety of materials, props, and real things that reflect the cultures and ethnic groups of all the children in the class.	☐	☐	☐
9. Encourage children to use their imaginations through activities such as storytelling.	☐	☐	☐
10. Avoid using coloring books, product patterns, and dittos.	☐	☐	☐
11. Offer "messy" open-ended activities such as water, sand and mud play, finger painting, face painting, and bubble blowing.	☐	☐	☐
12. Provide materials children can use in many different ways such as blocks, musical instruments, art supplies, and dress-up clothes.	☐	☐	☐

Interacting With Children in Ways That Encourage and Respect Original Ideas and Expressions

13. Encourage children to express their ideas and feelings.	☐	☐	☐
14. Extend children's dramatic play by assuming a "pretend" role.	☐	☐	☐
15. Comment on children's creative thinking.	☐	☐	☐
16. Respect the creative process as well as the creative product.	☐	☐	☐
17. Call attention to sensory experiences.	☐	☐	☐

Interacting With Children in Ways That Encourage and Respect Original Ideas and Expressions

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
18. Ask questions that encourage children to solve problems and think about things in new ways.	☐	☐	☐
19. Accept and value each child's unique creative expression.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses. Then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 7, Creative.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Encourage Creativity

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical behaviors of preschool children
- Use what you know about children to encourage their creativity

Preschoolers tend to be very creative.

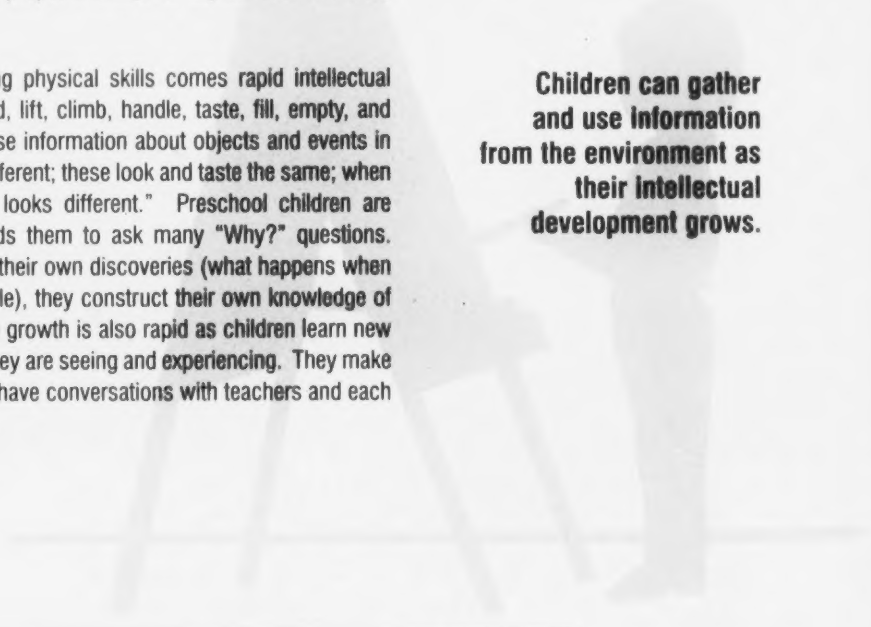
Many experts on creativity believe children are most creative during the preschool years. Preschoolers have vivid imaginations. They tend to be very curious and adapt at solving problems that arise from their explorations.

Children can manipulate tools and materials as their small muscle skills become more refined.

Physical development during the preschool years affects children's ability to express themselves in several ways. Because the rate of growth slows down, children in this age group don't tire as quickly as toddlers do. They can stay involved in an activity for long periods of time, if they are interested and engaged. Preschool children also have much greater control over the large muscles used to run, jump, climb, throw, and carry. Their small muscle skills and eye-hand coordination are becoming more refined. This increasing control over small muscles allows children to hold and use a variety of materials and equipment such as brushes, markers, crayons, and other drawing tools; scissors; rhythm instruments; sand, water, and dramatic play props; a computer keyboard and mouse; beads and strings; and so on.

Children can gather and use information from the environment as their intellectual development grows.

Along with children's greatly expanding physical skills comes rapid intellectual development. As they move, dig, build, lift, climb, handle, taste, fill, empty, and manipulate, they begin to gather and use information about objects and events in their environment: "These things are different; these look and taste the same; when you put this color with that color, it looks different." Preschool children are natural scientists. Their curiosity leads them to ask many "Why?" questions. When you encourage children to make their own discoveries (what happens when you mix two colors of paint, for example), they construct their own knowledge of math and science concepts. Language growth is also rapid as children learn new words and use them to describe what they are seeing and experiencing. They make up stories, give titles to their paintings, have conversations with teachers and each other, and ask many, many questions.



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Many children use creativity in combination with social skills.

Preschool children also use their creativity in combination with their growing social skills. Children may invent new ways to share or take turns with a favorite play material. Some children use creative problem-solving skills to negotiate with others: "If you let me play, too, we can use more puppets and put on a bigger show."

Many preschool children use dramatic play as an outlet for their creativity. They invent complicated roles and scenarios and think of innovative ways to use props and wear dress-up clothes. Frequently, dramatic play themes carry over from one day to the next. Teachers can respond by providing new materials or by offering indirect suggestions that extend the play or move it in a slightly different direction: "Those muffins look really tasty. I wish this bakery had a place to sit down while I eat."

Preschool children are more interested in the process of creating than they are in the products or end results.

Preschool children enjoy the process of creating. They explore materials, ideas, and techniques rather than focusing on the end result or product. Teachers should avoid commenting on what a child has made. A wrong guess can be embarrassing or hurtful to the child. The teacher's goal is to encourage the child to be aware of how a painting was made, what colors were used, if it should be displayed, and so on. "Tell me about your picture," is always an appropriate comment.

Preschool children find opportunities to be creative in almost every activity, routine, and interest area. Their creativity extends far beyond the art and music activities typically thought of as "creative" times. Alert, observant teachers have ongoing opportunities throughout the day to encourage children to express themselves, solve problems, and carry out unique plans and ideas.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you complete a three-day log describing the words and actions you use to encourage children's creativity. Focus on the small things you do each day to help children explore, solve problems, express their feelings, extend their play, use materials in new ways, and try new ideas. Review the example that follows. Then use the blank form to record your words and actions.

Encouraging Children's Creativity

(Example)

Dates: *March 20 - 22*

What Happened	How Did Your Response Encourage Creativity?
I was helping a group of children make playdough. Curt asked, "How can I make mine purple?" I said, "This morning you painted with purple paint." He said, "That's right. I mixed red and blue," and reached for the food coloring. I watched him knead drops of red and blue food coloring into the dough. It took a long time to get it to the right shade of purple. I said, "That's purple, all right." What other colors would you like to make?"	*I encouraged Curt to solve his problem without my direct assistance. I didn't intervene when he was taking a long time to color the dough. Instead I gave him plenty of time to carry out his plan. I asked him what other colors he would like to make to encourage him to apply what he knew about making different colors of paint to coloring dough.*
Janine and Hayley were making roads in the sand table. Their arm motions were quite vigorous, so some of the sand spilled on the floor. When they were finished with their work, I showed them where to get the broom and dustpan so they could clean up the sand.	*I allowed the children to express their creativity without telling them that they had to be more careful. I allowed them to work without interruption. When they were finished, I showed them how to clean up after themselves.*

Encouraging Children's Creativity

Dates: ______________

What Happened	**How Did Your Response Encourage Creativity?**

Discuss this activity with your trainer.

II. Providing an Environment That Supports Creativity

In this activity you will learn to:

- Provide a variety of materials children can actively explore and use in different ways
- Assess the environment and make changes, if needed, to ensure it encourages creativity

Children can use open-ended materials in a variety of ways.

Children can experience the challenge and joy of discovery when the environment is arranged to support active exploration and the supply of materials is interesting and varied. One of the easiest ways to promote children's creativity is to provide open-ended materials—items children can use in a variety of ways. Because they tend to trigger the imagination, open-ended materials are interesting to children of different ages and stages of development. For example, given a box of recycled materials, children might:

- make collages;
- sort and classify the items;
- make mobiles;
- decorate masks;
- use them in experiments; and
- turn them into dramatic play props.

Materials in all interest areas can encourage children's creativity.

Because children express their creativity in many different ways, it is important to include open-ended materials that invite discovery in all interest areas. Here are some examples of children engaged in creative work in different areas of the environment.

> Eduardo and Nikki are **outdoors** measuring the height of the marigold seedlings. Some plants are much taller than the others. Mr. Collins asks, "What do you think is making some plants grow faster than the others?"
>
> Ron is in the **library area** "writing" and "illustrating" a book. He tells Ms. West that he'd like to make a "real" book. She shows him some cardboard to use for a cover and demonstrates using a hole punch and a shoe lace to bind the pages together.
>
> Rhonda and Janine are setting up a bakery in the **dramatic play area.** They display their playdough cakes and cookies on some shelves made from shoe boxes. Ms. Lanier stops by to purchase a birthday cake.

> Brianna and Abdullah are in the **table toy area** making designs with a set of small colored, wooden cubes. Ms. Brunetti comments on their choice of materials, "Brianna, you are using red and blue blocks for your design. Abdullah, your design includes all the colors."
>
> J. J. is using a drawing program on the **computer.** He is learning how to make circles, squares, and triangles to use in his design. Ms. Whitcomb asks, "How do you put a triangle inside a circle?"
>
> Carley and Shoshana are in the **cooking area.** They are having a discussion about which ingredients to put in the trail mix. Mr. Bent asks, "What could you do so you both can make the kind of trail mix you like best?"

Module 3, Learning Environment, includes a checklist of materials for indoor interest areas and for the outdoor area. Refer to these checklists for more examples of open-ended materials.

Coloring books, dittos, and craft kits do not encourage creativity.

Many teachers wonder if it is a good idea to offer coloring books, dittos, or product patterns as part of their environment. The answer is simple: **No, it is not a good idea.**[2]

First of all, it is very difficult for young children to color within the lines of a ditto or coloring book figure. In addition, these types of experiences are not creative. They deny children opportunities to experiment, use their imaginations, and express their individuality as they can with open-ended materials.

What should you do if parents want their children to use these materials? Take the time to explain to parents why these structured materials don't help children grow and learn.

By sharing with parents your approach to encouraging creativity, you can offer them the reassurances they need. It doesn't take long to convince parents that their child's green and purple version of a pumpkin is more of a treasure than a perfectly round orange pumpkin that a teacher cut out and labeled with the child's name.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review characteristics of an environment that encourages children's creativity. As you read each one, think about whether your classroom environment meets these characteristics regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Mark one of the boxes on the right for each item listed and give a brief explanation for your "rating." An example is provided for the first one.

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[2] Adapted with permission from Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum® for Family Child Care* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, 1991), p. 139.

Does Your Environment Encourage Creativity?

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. A display of children's work greets visitors to the room. *We hang (at children's eye-level) children's pictures and photos of children doing creative activities on a bulletin board outside our room.*	☒	☐	☐
2. There are examples of creative "products"—drawings, paintings, photographs, books, sculptures, recipes, and inventions.	☐	☐	☐
3. The daily schedule includes long child-choice times, during which children can select what they want to do, what they want to use, and with whom.	☐	☐	☐
4. There is space to store works-in progress on the top of cabinets or shelves.	☐	☐	☐
5. Materials from indoors are brought outdoors so children can use them in a different setting.	☐	☐	☐

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
6. The interest areas reflect children's families, cultures, skills, and interests, and are rotated when children seem ready for new experiences.	☐	☐	☐
7. The environment can be rearranged when children need more room for movement or dancing.	☐	☐	☐
8. There is room to spread out and be messy. Cleaning supplies such as sponges, paper towels, and brooms are stored within children's reach.	☐	☐	☐
9. All interest areas are stocked with a variety of open-ended materials children can use in many ways.	☐	☐	☐

Use the space below to record any changes you would like to make.

Share the assessment results with your colleagues and plan ways to improve your environment.

III. Promoting Creativity Through Interactions With Children

In this activity you will learn to:

- Listen to and talk with children in ways that respect and encourage their efforts and accomplishments
- Ask open-ended questions that help children learn to think and solve problems

Your daily interactions with children can help them gain confidence in their abilities to create and learn. When you respond thoughtfully to questions, ask open-ended questions that encourage thinking and problem solving, and comment on what children are doing during the creative process, you support their creativity.

Teachers' thoughtful responses to children's questions and actions can support children's creativity.

The ways in which you respond to preschool children can convey the message that you value and support their creativity. What you say, how you ask and answer questions, and the ways in which you encourage learning through discovery all nurture creativity in children. Careful listening to what a child has to say and recognizing each child as an individual are crucial. Your enthusiasm for children's efforts and successes will greatly support their creativity. These practices also help children develop positive attitudes about sticking to a task and learning from mistakes. When these attitudes are encouraged during the preschool years, they are likely to have lasting effects on the child's entire development. An example showing how a teacher nurtures creativity follows.

> Ms. Williams watches Alex finger painting on a tray. She sees him using both hands to make large circles. He gets some paint on the elbow of one sleeve, which has started to slip down. She pushes up his sleeve gently, and says, "Alex, tell me about those enormous circles you are making. You seem to be enjoying that paint!" Alex smiles and says, "First, I made some big circles. Now, I'm going to make small ones." Ms. Williams continues watching for a while. When Alex appears to be finished with his creation she asks, "Would you like some paper to make a print of your circles?" "No, thanks," says Alex as he smooshes the circles with his hand. "That's enough circles. It's time to make some squiggly lines." Ms. Williams gets up to see what the other children are doing. "Let me know if you'd like to show me your squiggles," she says.

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Ms. Williams showed Alex that she valued and supported his creativity in several ways. She commented on the process Alex used in his finger painting. She didn't ask, "What are you making?" nor did she point out the paint on his sleeve. Ms. Williams knows that it is important to be patient about children's messes. She gently pushed up his sleeve for him rather than interrupt the creative process. She suggested paper to preserve the creation, accepted Alex's lack of interest in making a print, and offered to come back to see his "squiggles."

Teachers can ask open-ended questions to encourage children to explore and experiment.

Another way for teachers to encourage preschool children to think creatively is to ask open-ended questions. These are questions with many possible answers. In the following example, Mr. D'Souza asks open-ended questions to help David and Juana find a way to play with the same doll.

Mr. D'Souza:	"How could you both play with the doll?"
Juana:	"I should get it first because I'm older."
David:	"I could have the doll and Juana could have the carriage."
Mr. D'Souza:	"What could you do with the doll together?"
David:	"We could give her a bath."
Juana:	"I'll wash her hair and then you can give her a bottle. Okay?"

Mr. D'Souza's open-ended questions helped the children think of a way to solve the problem for themselves. His approach allowed the children to use creative thinking to arrive at a solution that both could agree with. As a result, the children felt competent, learned a problem-solving strategy they can use in the future, and practiced an important social skill, compromising.

Try asking these open-ended questions to encourage creative thinking.

Here are some questions that encourage creative thinking.

- What do you think about. . . ?
- Why do you think this happened?
- What would happen if. . . ?
- How do you think this works?
- What else can we use this for?
- How did you. . . ?
- What else is like this?
- How could you. . . ?

- Is there another way to do this?
- What's similar about these?
- What if we added this?
- In what ways are these different?
- What if we take this away?

(See Module 5, Cognitive, to learn more about asking open-ended questions.)

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review a list of teaching practices that encourage children's creativity. As you read each one, think about whether you and your colleagues use similar practices regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Mark one of the boxes on the right for each item listed and give a brief explanation for your "rating."

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Do Your Interactions With Children Encourage Creativity?

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. We comment on the techniques children use during the creative process rather than focusing on end results or products.	☐	☐	☐
2. We ask open-ended questions to help children think and solve problems.	☐	☐	☐
3. We show that we value each child's individual characteristics. We help children appreciate their own uniqueness and that of others.	☐	☐	☐
4. We accept children's messes and mistakes.	☐	☐	☐
5. We encourage children to make and carry out their own plans rather than telling them the "best" way to do things.	☐	☐	☐
6. We identify and try to reduce potential sources of stress and anxiety.	☐	☐	☐

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
7. We make sure children have pleasant and supportive experiences each day.	☐	☐	☐
8. We respond to children's requests for assistance.	☐	☐	☐
9. We observe children and intervene when appropriate to help them carry out their plans.	☐	☐	☐
10. We show enthusiasm for children's efforts and accomplishments.	☐	☐	☐

Use the space below to record any changes you would like to make.

Discuss the results of this learning activity with your colleagues. Encourage each other to continue using teaching practices that promote children's creativity.

IV. Encouraging Self-Expression Through Music and Movement Experiences

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize how music and movement experiences foster creativity in children
- Encourage children to express themselves through a variety of music and movement experiences

Children naturally connect music with moving their bodies.

You don't have to be talented to provide music and movement experiences for preschoolers. Most children love to sing, frequently repeating their favorite songs over and over. They aren't concerned with the quality of their voices or the teacher's ability to sing; they experience the enthusiasm and pure enjoyment of playing with sounds and moving their bodies. Because children naturally connect movement with music, listening to music invites them to explore what their bodies can do and to become aware of their bodies in space.

From a very early age, children respond to music. Infants smile when adults sing to them. They begin to move their bodies when they hear music, and they respond to toys that make a noise. Soon, they hum, sing, and make up chants. As their coordination increases, children begin moving to music. They sway, dance, bounce up and down, clap their hands, and stamp their feet.

Preschool children are becoming aware of rhythm and can use simple rhythm instruments. They like to move, walk, or jump when someone claps rhythmically or plays an instrument. They invent new ways to move their bodies and use props such as scarves, streamers, and hula hoops.

Listening to Sounds and Music

You can provide many opportunities throughout the day for children to listen to various sounds and different types of music. Children develop their listening skills when you make them aware of sounds in their environment, play background music, or offer special listening activities.

Encourage children to listen to the sounds that are all around us.

You can encourage children to become aware of familiar sounds: the ringing of the telephone, the rain banging on the window, the wind blowing leaves on trees. Preschoolers enjoy guessing games in which they close their eyes and listen to sounds. You might play music that includes sounds that children can identify. Try pointing out sounds during walks: "Do you hear the birds singing?" "The wind sounds like a howling dog." "Our shoes make different sounds on the sidewalk than they do on grass."

Help children enjoy and respond to different kinds of music in different ways.

Teachers can introduce children to different musical styles, including children's songs, classical, jazz, marches, musical plays, instrumentals, and traditional music from a variety of cultures. Many public libraries have a wide selection of children's CDs and tapes as well as other types of music that children will enjoy. Ask parents what kinds of songs or music their children like to listen to at home and try to incorporate these preferences into music experiences in your room.

Each type of music may have a different effect on children's moods. Classical music or quiet children's songs can be relaxing at naptime, while a march or a jazz piece can prompt dancing or parading around the room.

Use various strategies to focus children's attention on the music.

You can help older preschoolers learn to pay attention and concentrate by encouraging them to listen with you for a few minutes. Sometimes a child will stop to listen to a favorite song or to a melody that is particularly appealing. Younger children might not be able to sit still and listen to music for very long, but they could enjoy listening while they do something else. For example, try playing music in the art area. Ask the children who are painting or drawing to do so to the music.

"What does the music make you think of?"

"What different colors do you think of as you listen?"

"Does this music make you feel like painting quickly or slowly?"

Remember: play music selectively. When music is on all the time, it becomes background noise rather than something to listen to, experience, and enjoy.

Singing with Children

Some teachers schedule singing times every day or several times a week. Others enjoy singing during frequent informal sessions. Here are some suggestions for singing with preschool children.

Make a list of all the simple songs the children know. Keep the list handy to remind you of songs they like to sing. As children learn new songs, add them to the list.

Sing songs during transitions. For example, sing while getting ready for lunch or during clean-up. When children have to wait for a short time, reduce the frustration by singing.

Make specific songs a part of familiar routines. You can tie special songs to daily routines, such as starting the day or cleaning up. Some children gain a sense of security from knowing that certain events will always occur in the same way. They will quickly point out if you forget to include regular songs in their regular places.

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Play singing games. Encourage everyone to sing while they play games such as "London Bridge" and "The Farmer in the Dell."

Act out story songs. You can make props for some songs, such as "The Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly", so children can sing and act at the same time.

Make audiotapes of the children singing alone or in a group. Most children enjoy hearing their own voices on tape. You can share the tapes with family members.

Sing the same song in different ways. Try singing the same song with and without instruments, loudly, softly, in a whisper, quickly, slowly, sitting, standing, marching, or hopping.

Make up new songs with the children. They can be short and simple.

"How are you?" "I'm fine, I'm fine."

"What are we making?" "Ice cream!"

Keep in mind what preschool children are like. Remember that they typically.

enjoy repeating songs they like;

prefer quick, lively songs to slow ones;

like funny songs and nonsense songs;

improve their ability to carry a tune with careful listening and practice; and

do not always understand that some songs are appropriate for specific events; for example, they want to sing "Jingle Bells" in May or "Good Morning" before going home.

Try these suggestions when introducing a new song.

Learning a new song should be a pleasant experience for children. If children don't pick the song up easily, come back to it later. If the song seems too difficult, pick one with a simpler tune and lyrics. These tips may help you introduce new songs.

- Help children recognize the difference between a speaking and a singing voice. First, say the words to a song in your speaking voice; then sing them.
- Make a tape of yourself singing the new song. Children can learn the song by listening to the tape. They would probably rather hear your voice than that of a professional singer.
- Tell a story about the new song, using a flannel board if you like. "Once there was a girl named Mary. She had a little lamb . . ."
- Repeat the words for the song several times; break up the phrases if they are too long for preschoolers to remember.

- Sing the song several times, encouraging children to join you.
- Let the children sing the song several times if they like.

Playing With Rhythm Instruments

Most children love to make their own music. They even use their bodies as their first rhythm instruments. Start clapping and invite children to join you: "Let me hear you clap. How softly can you clap? How loudly can you clap? Can you clap slowly like this? Can you clap really fast?"

Preschool children also enjoy making music with simple rhythm instruments. A basic set of rhythm instruments includes the following:

drums
xylophones
hand bells
clackers
maracas/shakers
cymbals
rhythm sticks
tambourines
sandpaper blocks
triangles

Preschool children also enjoy using harmonicas, xylophones, hand bells, kazoos, and an electronic keyboard.

Because the primary purpose of instruments is to produce interesting and varied sounds, children don't need expensive professional instruments. Here are some ideas for making simple instruments:

Children can produce interesting and varied sounds using homemade instruments.

Drums: Glue lids to cylindrical oatmeal boxes, or cover ice cream containers (donated by a local store). Use dowels as drum sticks.

Cymbals: Flatten aluminum pie plates, make holes, then attach noise makers such as thread spools or large buttons with string.

Shakers: Fill boxes or plastic containers with pebbles or beans. Tape the lids shut so the contents won't fall out.

Kazoos: Use a rubber band to attach a piece of waxed paper around the end of a cardboard tube from a roll of paper towels or toilet paper.

Sand blocks: Use thumb tacks to fasten coarse sandpaper to small blocks of soft wood, and screw-on cabinet knobs to make a handle on each block.

Hand and wrist bells: Sew bells on a piece of wide elastic, then sew the ends of the elastic together.

When you first introduce rhythm instruments, give each child the same kind. As you expose children to a greater variety of instruments, provide duplicates to minimize conflicts over sharing. Allow plenty of time for children to explore the instruments. Name each instrument and make up a song about the name. Invite children to take turns demonstrating the sounds they can make with their instruments. Ask open-ended questions: What sounds does the instrument make? How can you make different sounds? How can you make the sounds louder or softer?

Preschool children enjoy marching in a band or having a parade.

To form a marching band, have each child select an instrument and move around the room playing the instrument to different types of music. Try a march, then something slower. Put the instruments down and have the children clap or stamp their feet to the beat. You can march backward, in a circle, or following a pattern made by laying rope on the floor. A variation on a marching band is to have a parade. Children can make flags or banners and carry them as they walk or march around the playground or through the halls. Teachers can use these activities as opportunities to talk about how people in different cultures use marches and parades to celebrate special days such as Thanksgiving Day, Cinco de Mayo, Mardi Gras, the Fourth of July, and so on.

Encouraging Creative Movement

Music and movement tend to go hand in hand. Many children automatically respond to music by moving the way the music makes them feel. They also enjoy experimenting with moving their bodies in different ways. You can encourage their creativity by asking questions such as:

> "What can your feet do?"
>
> "How can you move your arms?"
>
> "How can you move just your hands?"

You can also invite children to:

> "Bend from your waist."
>
> "Wiggle your fingers."
>
> "Stamp your feet as loudly as you can."
>
> "Tiptoe in place."

You can expand children's enjoyment of moving to music and stimulate their imaginations by adding open-ended props. It's fun to use streamers, light-weight fabric, sheets, scarves, feathers, balloons, capes, ribbons, and hula hoops while moving and dancing to music. There is no right or wrong way to use these props, so children can decide what they want to do with them.

Another simple movement activity that encourages children's creativity is imitating how animals walk and move, with or without musical accompaniment. Children can crawl like a snake, waddle like a duck, kick like a mule, slither like a snake, or jump like a kangaroo. Or, you can tap into children's vivid imaginations by suggesting that they pretend to be the wind, the rain, snow, or thunder (especially on windy, rainy, or snowy days), or asking how they think a car moves, or a truck, a rocking chair, or a weathervane.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you meet with a colleague to discuss your responses to the questions posed on the previous pages. Together you will decide how to improve your approach to using music and movement experiences as opportunities to enhance children's self-expression. Then you will select a strategy to implement, try it out, and reflect on what happened. Begin by reviewing the example that follows.

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Do Your Music and Movement Experiences Promote Creativity?

(Example)

How could you improve your approach to listening to music and sounds?

Because we play background music all day long, nobody really pays attention to it. From now on we want to be more selective about what we play, and when.

How could you improve your approach to singing with children?

There isn't really anything we want to change, except to expand our repertoire of songs.

How could you improve your approach to using rhythm instruments?

Our set of rhythm instruments is missing several items and this often causes problems, so we don't use the instruments very often. We will order new instruments or make some ourselves.

How could you improve your approach to creative movement?

This is a favorite activity in our room. We have lots of props and a wide variety of music the children enjoy listening to for movement activity.

Select one of the strategies you listed above and try it out for a week or more. Then answer the questions that follow.

Strategy: *Making rhythm instruments.*

How did you implement your strategy?

We sent home a notice asking parents to collect materials we could use to make instruments. We collected or purchased additional materials. Then, we set up the materials along with a book of instructions in the staff lounge. We had fun making instruments during breaks and planning times. Finally, we introduced the new instruments to a small group of children.

How did the children respond?

They were excited about using the new instruments. All the children tried all of the instruments. Then each child returned to the instrument he or she found most interesting

What other changes would you like to make?

We don't plan to make any more changes for now. We will continue introducing new instruments to small groups of children. We'll also observe how children use the instruments independently. If our observations indicate the need for further changes, we'll discuss what to do next.

Do Your Music and Movement Experiences Promote Creativity?

How could you improve your approach to listening to music and sounds?

How could you improve your approach to singing with children?

How could you improve your approach to using rhythm instruments?

How could you improve your approach to creative movement?

Select one of the strategies you listed above and try it out for a week or more. Then answer the questions that follow.

Strategy:

How did you implement your strategy?

How did the children respond?

What other changes would you like to make?

Discuss this activity with your trainer. Work with your colleagues to implement the other strategies you came up with in this activity.

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V. Offering Art Experiences That Invite Exploration and Experimentation

In this activity you will learn to:

- Provide a variety of open-ended materials and activities that encourage children to express themselves through art
- Offer materials and experiences that respond to children's individual skills and interests

Art experiences should be relaxed comfortable times when children can move at their own pace.

Art is an important part of any program serving preschool children. For many children, art is a relaxing activity that stimulates all their senses as they paint, draw, glue things together, or pound a lump of clay. Art activities encourage children to use their imaginations and create something of their own. They can make choices and try out their own ideas without thinking that there has to be a right or wrong result. The daily schedule should include long periods of time during which children can decide what they want to do, gather the materials they need, and carry out their plans.

As noted in Learning Activity I, most preschool children tend to be more interested in the process of art than they are in the products. They want to discover what will happen if they use the side of a crayon to make scribbles, or if they finger paint with their fists or elbows. The youngest preschoolers simply enjoy the physical experience of scribbling with a crayon or squeezing playdough through their fingers. As they develop small muscle skills and coordination, they are pleased to find out that they can control the marks the crayon makes on the paper or determine the width of a playdough "snake." As they learn to use a variety of media, they like experimenting with colors, brush strokes, textures, and combinations of shapes. Older preschoolers begin to care about the products, and may become critical of their own work. Ask children who make drawings to tell you about their creations. Listen carefully to what they are telling you; these early pictures are a form of communication.

Materials in the art area should be set up within children's reach so that they can use them without adult assistance. Typically, the following activities are available every day:

painting: easels, paint, brushes, large pieces of paper, clothesline and pins for hanging pictures to dry;

drawing: crayons, markers, chalk, and paper in several sizes;

making collages: paste, school glue, paper, cardboard, scissors, a variety of natural and recycled materials, magazines to cut or tear, scraps of paper from other projects;

using playdough and clay: airtight containers holding clay or playdough and a variety of tools and utensils.

Some art experiences require a teacher's supervision or leadership. Children may need help using tools or materials safely, or they may need a simple step-by-step explanation of a process. Also, some activities have the potential to be very messy. In these instances, teachers have to communicate to children that it's all right to be messy if the messes are a necessary part of the creative process. Some examples of art activities supervised or led by teachers include:

- finger painting on paper, cookie sheets, or a table covered with vinyl;
- weaving with paper, cloth strips, or yarn;
- making puppets;
- painting murals;
- making three-dimensional sculptures using wood scraps, recycled items, and school glue or nails; and
- making prints using paint and objects such as Styrofoam packing material, lengths of string, or pieces of sponge cut in a variety of shapes.

If the children are enjoying an activity you can offer it for several days and add new materials to expand their explorations. The goal is to provide a balance of experiences: those which children can choose and do independently and those which teachers plan in advance. Several popular and effective preschool art experiences are described below: drawing, painting, creating collages and assemblages, and using clay and playdough.

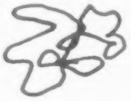
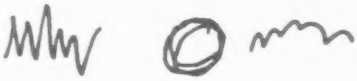
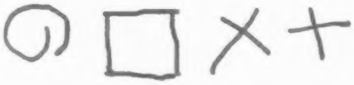
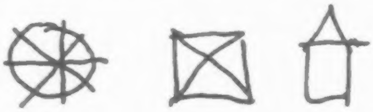
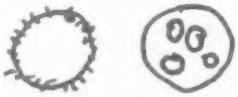
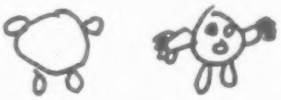
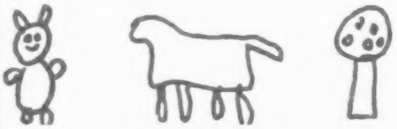
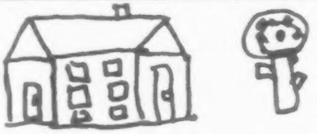
Drawing and Painting

All young children go through the same stages as they develop drawing and painting skills. Ask children who make drawings to tell you about their creations. Listen carefully to what they are telling you: these early pictures are a form of communication. Teachers need to understand and recognize the stages of artistic development so that they can:

- provide appropriate materials and art experiences; and
- respond to children's work in ways that promote creativity.

The following chart summarizes the stages children pass through as they develop drawing and painting skills.

Developmental Stages of Children's Art[3]

Stage	What Children Do	What It Looks Like
Early scribbles	Make random marks in many directions. Enjoy physical motions.	
Later scribbles	Make circles, lines, or zigzags. May cover whole paper. Control use of a drawing tool.	
Basic shapes	Recognize shapes such as circles, rectangles, and crosses and repeat them.	
Drawing mandalas	Combine designs—crosses with circles or rectangles.	
Drawing suns	Draw circles or ovals with lines at the edges or marks in the middle. Adults think they look like suns or human faces.	
Drawing humans	Combine shapes and lines to make a figure that represents a person.	
Drawing animals and trees	Combine the same shapes and lines to draw animals and trees. Animals have ears on top of circle. Later animals are no longer upright. Trees begin as rectangles with a circle on top.	
Making pictorial drawings	Combine shapes and figures they have mastered. Size and color may not be realistic. Objects on the same page may not be related and may be free floating.	

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[3] Based on Rhonda Kellogg, *Analyzing Children's Art* (Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books, 1970).

Children move through the same stages in painting as they do in drawing. At first, children are interested only in how it feels to paint. They love the way the brush slides across the paper and usually are not very interested in the color that results. This is why many first paintings look the same; they are generally a brownish-purplish color that results when the child brushes layer upon layer of color onto the paper, often using every inch of available space.

For most children, the feel of the brush on the paper is as interesting as the color that results.

First-time painters may need help learning how to hold the brush or how to wipe the brush on the jar so that paint doesn't form globs on the paper. It's best to put small amounts of paint in the jar; children find it easier to control where the paint goes when there is not too much of it. Also, brushes tend to last longer when the paint level goes no higher than the bristles. Teachers should assist children who request help, while at the same time allowing all children to experiment and learn through trial and error.

Some children may need help learning painting skills.

Most four- and five-year-olds enjoy a wide range of colors. They mix colors together and add white paint to create pastels. They like using colors such as purple and black as well as the primary colors. And they may still enjoy mixing every color available to create those brownish-purplish colors that adults find hard to name!

Gradually, children become more purposeful in their painting. They ask for specific colors to use and want to place things on the paper in specific ways. They may be concerned with drips that disrupt what they are trying to do. Eventually, they reach the stage where they plan what they want to paint.

Experienced painters plan what they want to paint.

You can provide children with a wealth of experiences by simply changing what they paint on, the paint itself, or the paper. The list below suggests a variety of art experiences young children will enjoy.

Changing paper, paint, and tools can give children a variety of painting experiences.

- Using different types of paper

    colored construction paper

    sandpaper

    wrapping paper

    wallpaper samples

    Styrofoam packing pieces (on tables instead of easels)

    shapes such as circles, squares, or long strips.

- Using a variety of techniques

    blow painting—using a straw to blow a glob of paint across the paper

    spatter painting—using a toothbrush and screen to paint stencils of leaves, feathers, shells, and so on

crayon-resist painting—painting with diluted paint over crayon designs

folded painting—placing globs of paint on a piece of paper, folding it, then unfolding it

- Using different textures

  paper and brushes

  sawdust, sand, salt, and tempera paint in separate containers

  experimenting with the effects of different substances on paint and paper—for example, adding a substance to the paint beforehand; sprinkling it on the paper and painting over it

- Experiencing different colors

  using finger or tempera paint in primary colors

  experimenting with white paint

  adding white paint to create pastels

  discovering what happens when specific colors are mixed

- Working with different painting tools

rollers	plastic squeeze bottles
whisk brooms	sponges cut into shapes
straw	stamps
marbles	string

Many children enjoy finger painting.

Preschool children find finger painting a particularly appealing art experience. Whenever possible, allow children to finger paint directly on a Formica tabletop so they have ample room to experiment with paint and fingers. If you want to spend the money, you can purchase glossy paper, especially designed for finger painting. Children can also finger paint on a large piece of plastic or vinyl stretched across a table and taped in place, on cookie sheets, or on cafeteria-type trays.

Collages and Assemblages

Collages are made by pasting all kinds of things on a flat surface. An assemblage is a three-dimensional piece made by fastening a variety of objects together. Assemblages and collages offer wonderful opportunities for creative expression.

Children can use a variety of materials to make original collages. These materials may include fabric scraps, ribbon, wood scraps, Styrofoam, feathers, magazine pictures, and buttons. Children paste the selected items on cardboard, heavy corrugated paper, construction paper, or posterboard. Computer paper will work for collages made with paper scraps.

After the children have had experience in making collages, they can use scissors to cut pieces of paper or thin materials (such as wallpaper samples or ribbon) to the size and shape they want.

Children make imaginative assemblages by putting together a variety of three-dimensional items in unusual ways. To make assemblages, children need items such as:

- a framework for the structure: blocks of wood, shoe boxes, plastic containers, berry boxes;
- materials to extend the framework: tile pieces, Styrofoam, wooden clothespins, dowels;
- things for fastening items to the structure: toothpicks, wire, wooden dowels, straws, paper fasteners, yarn, nails, pipe cleaners, school glue, and tape;
- things used to poke into or attach: cork, fabric, paper, Styrofoam balls, sponge fragments; and
- things with interesting shapes and textures (from your collection of recycled materials).

Making assemblages can encourage growth and development in many ways. The invitation to experiment reinforces natural curiosity. Thinking of what to put with what leads to growth of planning and organizational skills. Learning that a big piece of cork is too heavy for one toothpick to hold up is a science discovery. Trying different ways to make an assemblage stand up is practice in solving problems. Looking around at other people's work is part of learning to appreciate unique approaches to creative self-expression.

Exploring Playdough and Clay

Given a clump of playdough for the first time, most children will smell it, taste it, poke it with a finger, pinch it, squeeze it between their fingers, push it around the table, and pound it with their hands. Children need plenty of time to explore this material, experience its texture, and find out what it can do.

Children can use dough directly on a table top. As they become familiar with this material, children enjoy using props such as wooden spoons, wooden mallets, rolling pins, and cookie cutters. Make sure you have duplicates of the most popular items. (See Module 3, Learning Environment, for more examples of playdough props.)

Making playdough is an excellent creative experience.

Children have as much fun making playdough as they do using it. When they make their own dough, they can vary the texture, amount, and color. The chart on the following pages includes two popular playdough recipes. Store the finished playdough in the refrigerator in sealed plastic bags, large plastic containers, or coffee tins lined with plastic.

Clay provides a different kind of experience.

There are two types of clay that match the developmental skills of preschool children: soft modeling clay, which does not harden and dry out, and clay that can be baked or left to harden by itself. If possible, provide both types of clay in your art area. Children enjoy manipulating soft clay and might use it to make balls, snakes, or different shapes. Soft clay is also fun to use with rolling pins, cookie cutters, and tongue depressors. Clay that hardens is a good choice for children who want to save their work. Once the clay hardens, children can paint their creations.

Display individual containers of clay and playdough and an assortment of props to use with them on low, open shelves where children can reach them. Children can decide which material they want to work with and choose some props.

The chart that follows describes materials children can use for a variety of art experiences.

Suggested Art Materials for a Preschool Room

Item	Comments
Paper and cardboard	*Provide a variety of papers—tissue, construction, wrapping, sandpaper—so children can experiment with texture, color, and absorbency. A local newspaper or printer may give away end rolls of newsprint. Stores may donate outdated wallpaper and fabric sample books. Offices may save their scrap paper for your class. When you purchase paper, buy large sizes (at least 12" x 18") so that children can make bold movements.*
Brushes	*Offer a variety of sizes. Young children find one-inch brushes with thick handles about 5" or 6" in length easiest to use.*
Other painting tools	*Provide sponges, cotton balls, paper towels, marbles, ink stamps, feathers, leaves, tongue depressors, straws, strings, eye droppers, and anything else you or the children think of.*
Easels	*Hang a piece of plastic on the wall and tape or clip paper on the plastic, or build simple easels.*
Paint	*Use liquid tempera paint because, although expensive, it lasts a long time and produces vibrant colors. Powdered tempera is much cheaper, but it must be mixed to the right consistency. Add a few drops of alcohol or wintergreen to mixed tempera to keep it from going sour. Add a few soap flakes to improve the consistency and to make the paint easier to wash out of clothes.*
Finger paint	*Make finger paint by combining 1 C liquid starch with 6 C water, 1/2 C soap flakes, and a few drops of food coloring. Or, you can mix 3 T sugar with 1/2 C cornstarch in a sauce pan, then add 2 C cold water. Cover the mixture and cook it over low heat until it thickens. Add food coloring after the paint cools.*
Building materials—any size scraps	*Offer linoleum, masonite, metal pieces, nails, tiles, wallboard, wire, wire mesh, wood scraps, large tapestry materials, and wooden dowels.*
Crayons and other drawing materials	*Provide large, good-quality crayons that produce even, vibrant, color. (Less expensive crayons use more wax and have less color.) For variety, offer white and colored chalk, pens, pencils, and washable markers. To make soap crayons for water play, mix 1/8 C water with 1 C soap flakes and add food coloring. Pour the mixture into plastic ice cube trays or popsicle molds. Remove when hardened.*
Playdough	*Commercial varieties can be harmful if swallowed and are difficult to remove from carpets. To make playdough, combine and knead 2 C flour, 1 C salt, 2 T oil, 1 C water, and a few drops of food coloring. To make a smoother playdough, add 1T cream of tartar to the above ingredients and heat the mixture in a pan, stirring constantly, until the dough pulls away from the sides of the pan and forms a lump. Then knead the dough. Store in plastic bags or containers in the refrigerator.*

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Item	Comments
Clay	*For dough that will harden, mix and knead 2 C corn starch, 1 C baking soda, 1 C water, and food coloring. The recipe for modeling clay is 1 C salt, 1 1/2 C flour, 1/2 C warm water, 2 T oil, and food coloring.*
Tools for playdough and clay	*Provide thick, short dowels, rolling pins, cookie cutters, gadgets that make impressions such as meat tenderizer.*
Paste or glue	*Offer white paste and school glue. Both are inexpensive and adequate. You may need a specific kind of glue for some projects and activities.*
Scissors	*Invest in good-quality scissors with blunt ends. Provide left-handed scissors as needed.*
Natural items	*Collect acorns, feathers, flowers, pine cones, seashells, seeds, stones, pebbles, and so on for collages or decorating.*
Sewing items	*Have on hand beads, braids, buttons, cotton balls, ribbons, shoelaces, snaps, hooks and eyes, and yarn on felt or fabric. Large plastic sewing needles, thick yarn and plastic canvas are available at craft or variety stores.*
Fabrics	*Offer a variety of colors and textures. Save (or ask parents or a fabric store to save) burlap, canvas, denim, felt, fake fur, lace, leather, oilcloth, and terry cloth scraps of all sizes.*
Household items	*Provide items such as aluminum foil, bottle tops, plastic wrap, parchment, corks, egg cartons, clean bleach bottles, empty food and beverage containers, boxes, Styrofoam packaging, cans, doilies, spray bottles, string, and toothpicks.*
Other "artsy" items	*Use your own imagination; try glitter, confetti, broken appliance parts, pipe cleaners, wooden beads, stamp pads and stamps, marbles, shredded paper, old business cards, hangers, and wires. Some communities have recycling centers where you can purchase interesting "junk" for a nominal charge.*
Clean-up items	*Maintain a good supply of mops, sponges, brooms, and towels so all the children can participate in clean-up. Store toxic cleaning products in locked cabinets.*

Applying Your Knowledge

[illegible]

Observing a Child and Planning an Art Activity

(Example)

Child: *Ronnie* **Age:** *4 years* **Dates:** *October 7- 9*

Art Experiences	Time	What Happened
Day One		
Drawing with markers on paper	*10 minutes*	*Ronnie used blue and red markers to make circles and spirals. He left his paper on the table.*
Easel painting outside	*20 minutes*	*He used a wide-bristled brush and red paint. He made a circle and long vertical lines. He switched to black paint and made horizontal lines and dots. He finished by using red again. He took down his paper and asked me to hang it up to dry.*

Planning an Art Activity

Activity: *Sponge painting* **Date:** *March 12*

Setting: *In the art area after the children wake up from naps.* **Number of children at one time:** *Four*

Why did you plan this activity?

Ronnie seems to like the feeling of painting. I think he'd like to experiment with a different tool—a sponge instead of a brush to make dots or other marks.

What materials are needed?

Three pie pans to hold tempera paint; sponges cut up into small pieces; large pieces of paper.

What did the children do?

Three children came and had fun making sponge paintings. Then Ronnie came over. He used the sponge to make lines on his paper. Then he smeared them all together.

What did you do and say to encourage children's creativity?

I set up the materials and waited to see if any children would choose the activity. When they asked what to do, I explained without telling them exactly what to do. I asked Ronnie if he would like to try using the sponge like he uses the brush. He tried it but went back to making lines. I stepped back to let him fully explore the new tools.

Observing a Child and Planning an Art Activity

Child: ____________________ **Age:** ____________ **Dates:** __________

Art Experiences	Time	What Happened
Day One		
Day Two		
Day Three		

Planning an Art Activity

Activity: ______________________ **Date:** ______________

Setting: ______________________ **Number of children at one time:** ____

Why did you plan this activity?

What materials are needed?

What did the children do?

What did you do and say to encourage children's creativity?

Discuss this activity with your trainer

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for promoting children's creativity.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Summarize what you've learned, and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed them, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheet

Overview

(pp. 5-7)

Arranging the Environment to Encourage Exploration and Experimentation

1. **How did Ms. Williams arrange the environment to encourage exploration and experimentation?**
    a. *She displayed an interesting variety of containers, fasteners, and miscellaneous materials on open shelves and in baskets so children could make selections and clean up without adult assistance.*

    b. *She covered a table and left it empty so children could spread out, explore, and be messy.*

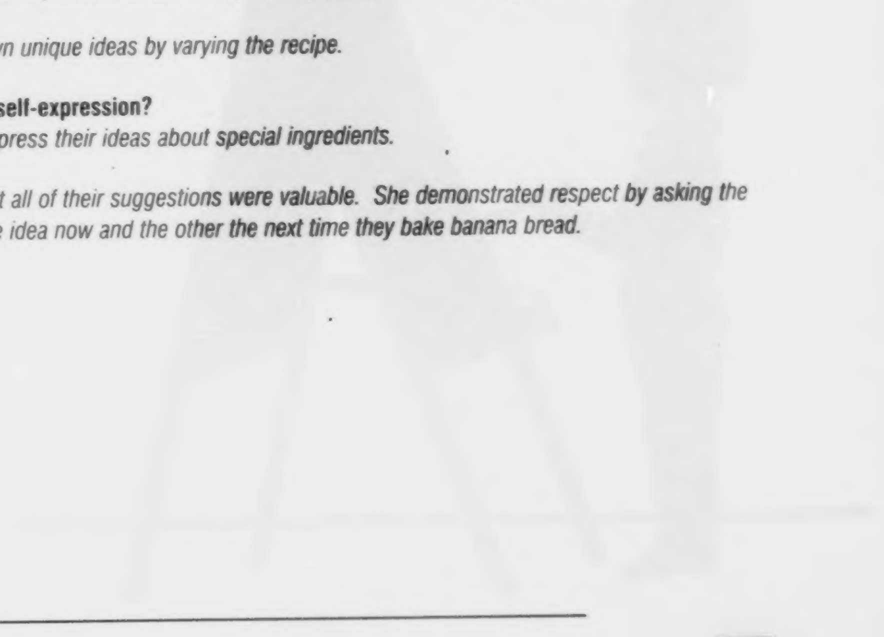
    c. *She provided space to store unfinished projects so children could work on them the next day.*

2. **How do open-ended materials promote children's creativity?**
    a. *There is no right or wrong way to use the materials.*

    b. *They invite children to explore and experiment without any rules (e.g., connecting pieces, constructing houses or spaceships, making moving parts).*

    c. *They allow children to use their imaginations, make choices and decisions about how to use the materials, and express themselves in ways that are unique and relevant to their own lives.*

Offering a Variety of Materials and Activities That Promote Self-Expression



1. **Why are cooking activities such as baking banana bread good opportunities to promote creativity?**
    a. *Children feel proud of their accomplishments when they actively participate in making something "real."*

    b. *Children can express their own unique ideas by varying the recipe.*

2. **How did Ms. Vaughn encourage self-expression?**
    a. *She invited the children to express their ideas about special ingredients.*

    b. *She let the children know that all of their suggestions were valuable. She demonstrated respect by asking the children if they could use one idea now and the other the next time they bake banana bread.*

Interacting With Children in Ways That Encourage and Respect Original Ideas and Expressions

1. **How did Ms. Kim encourage and respect the children's original ideas?**
   a. *She commented on the size of their building.*

   b. *She allowed them to leave their house in place rather than dismantling it and putting the blocks away.*

2. **How did Ms. Kim's interactions with the children promote their creativity?**
   a. *She asked open-ended questions to help the children figure out a way to protect their building and to think of a way to remember it for a long time.*

   b. *She showed that she valued their ideas by telling Carlos where he could find materials to make a sign and by offering to get the camera and take a picture of the children and their building.*

Glossary

Creativity

The ability to develop something new-an idea or product-that is substantially different from anything the person has seen or heard before.

Open-ended materials

Materials (such as blocks, dramatic play props, and art supplies) that children can use in many different ways.

Open-ended question

A question that can be answered in a number of ways.

Problem solving

The process of thinking through a problem and coming up with one or several possible solutions.

Self

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Overview

Fostering children's self-esteem involves:

- Developing a positive and supportive relationship with each child
- Helping children accept and appreciate themselves and others
- Providing opportunities for children to be successful and feel competent

Self-esteem evolves from a sense of self.

This module is about two closely related topics—how children gain a sense of self and how this understanding can lead to self-esteem. A sense of self is an awareness of one's identity. Your identity is made up of many variables: physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, strengths, interests, language, the foods you do or don't eat, experiences in your family, at school, and in the community, your expectations and values, what is expected of you, and whether you feel valued by others. Your identity and sense of self develops and changes throughout your life. Your physical appearance changes, you develop new skills and interests, you experience and learn from your successes and failures, and you establish relationships with new people.

Self-esteem grows out of a sense of identity. Some people have mainly negative feelings about themselves. They might dislike the way they look, feel they have nothing in common with other family members, reject their ethnicity and culture, or think they are not capable of succeeding. Others are comfortable with themselves. They may still want to improve some aspect of their lives by, for example, beginning an exercise program or being more attentive to their families, but, overall they have a positive sense of self and feel valued by others.

Children develop self-esteem when they feel valued and experience success.

From birth, children begin developing a sense of self. Some of their feelings towards themselves may be positive and some may be negative. These feelings will affect their entire adjustment to life—their ability to play, to relate to others, and to learn. These feelings are strongly influenced by their relationships with other people—such as family members, friends, and teachers.

There has been much discussion among those who work with young children about the importance of self-esteem and what adults can do to foster children's positive feelings about themselves. Some popular practices designed to promote self-esteem may lead instead to over-indulgent self-love that is based solely on trivial things. For example, when children are asked to name something that makes them special, they may focus on relatively insignificant personal characteristics such as their long hair or new shoes. If this type of response is reinforced often enough, children may begin to believe that superficial traits make them special. The strategies recommended in this module focus on providing opportunities for children to experience the deep satisfaction that comes from mastering a new skill or helping another person. Children's sense of self grows from real accomplishments as they learn what they can do and receive encouragement for meaningful efforts and accomplishments.[1] Self-esteem gives children the confidence to tackle problems, attempt new challenges, help others, recover from setbacks, and learn from their mistakes.

Teachers can help children develop a positive sense of self.

As a teacher, you play an important role in helping children develop a sense of identity and self-esteem. By demonstrating respect—for each child as an individual, for the needs of the group, and for yourself and your colleagues—you convey the message that each person is valued. When you offer help in solving a problem, listen and respond to feelings, or comment on a new painting technique—you are fostering children's sense of self and self-esteem. Your support and encouragement help children develop confidence in their own abilities. Through your relationships with children, you help them learn to value themselves and others. By offering a variety of appropriate materials, activities, and experiences you provide opportunities for children to meet challenges and experience success.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in fostering children's self-esteem. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of this module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

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[1] Based on William Damon, *Greater Expectations* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995).

Developing a Positive and Supportive Relationship with Each Child

Observe each child regularly to learn about individual needs, skills, abilities, interests, culture, and family experiences.	"Roger seems to be getting more used to his new baby sister. I saw him in the house corner saying to a doll, 'Don't cry. I'll get you a bottle."
Encourage children to talk about their feelings and take their concerns seriously.	"I know you want to play with the truck now. It's hard to wait. What would you like to do until it's your turn?"
Learn and use a few words in the home language of children whose first language is not English.	"Silvia, ¿puedes ayudárme buscar estós libros por favor?" (Can you help me look for those books?)
Know what each child can do and show that you think each child is special.	"James, the gerbil ran behind the shelves. You're good at getting him back in his cage. Could you help us?"
Offer verbal and gentle nonverbal contact—a hug, a touch, a smile—to show you care.	"Dion, you're the first to wake up from nap! How would you like to help me prepare the snack?"
Spend individual time with each child every day.	"I'm coming over to the block area right now to hear all about your building."

Ms. Kim passes the easels where Shawn is painting a picture. Shawn is smiling and seems very happy with his work. He steps back from the easel to look at his picture. Ms. Kim stops to talk with him. "Shawn, would you like some help hanging your picture?" "Okay," he answers. They each hold one side of the picture and hang it up on the line. Ms. Kim points to the picture and says, "I see you have used a lot of blue paint, and it looks like you used the side of the brush to make those marks. Last week I also noticed you using a lot of blue paint Blue seems to be one of your favorite colors." Shawn nods and says, "Yeah, I like blue. I'm going to paint another blue picture." He goes back to the easel to start another picture.

1. **How did Ms. Kim work on building a positive and supportive relationship with Shawn?**

2. **How did Ms. Kim work on building Shawn's self-esteem?**

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Helping Children Accept and Appreciate Themselves and Others

Provide a variety of activities and materials that encourage all children to participate. Avoid making biased remarks concerning gender, disabilities, culture, ethnic background, or any other differences.	"Therese, tell Carlos that of course girls can build with blocks. Look at those pictures of construction workers. There are men and women."
Acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments.	"Leila, I heard you use your words to ask the other children for a turn with the wagon."
Display pictures of children's families and offer home-like materials and activities to help children feel secure.	"Ms. Cane, the children had a great time trying your recipe for flat bread. If you have other recipes, you can send them with Dustin."
Show by what you say and do that you respect each child.	"Martha, I put a new book in the library on whales because you told me how much you like them."
Reinforce children's behavior when they share, cooperate, or help others.	"Marcus, I noticed you showing Krystina how to make a print of her finger painting You're the kind of person who likes to help others."
Make sure the environment and activities reflect the cultures of all children in the group and help children learn about and appreciate a wide variety of cultures and ethnic groups.	"Teresa, you're right Mardi Gras masks are like the ones people from other countries wear in their celebrations."

Jerry places a wooden block on the tower he is building. "Look, I did it!" he calls to Mr. Lopez. "That's a very tall tower you've built," says Mr. Lopez, bending down for a closer look. Jerry smiles proudly. Just then, Sandy walks by, swinging her arms. Crash! Jerry's tower tumbles to the floor. "No!" shouts Jerry. He lifts his arm to hit Sandy. "Jerry," Mr. Lopez says, reaching up to stop Jerry's swing. "Sandy hit your tower by accident, but I can't let you hit her." Tell Sandy how you feel." Jerry turns to Sandy and says, "Don't knock down my building! Be careful."

1. **What feelings did Jerry appear to have about his block tower?**

2. **How did Mr. Lopez help Jerry learn to express his feelings in an appropriate way?**

Providing Opportunities for Children to Be Successful and Feel Competent

Encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves, even if this takes a long time. Provide help only when asked or when a child is anxious.	"You climbed to the top of our climber by yourself. How do you like the view up there?"
Accept mistakes as a natural part of learning to do something new.	"Whoops! The paint spilled. Get a sponge from the sink so you can clean it up."
Provide a range of activities and materials that can be enjoyed by children with different interests, abilities, and skill levels.	Keep on hand playdough and utensils, a variety of puzzles, a range of picture books, and so on.
Help children learn how to solve their own problems.	"You both want to use the same puppet. How can we solve this problem? Who has an idea?"
Help children handle their feelings about separating from their families.	"It's hard to say good-bye to Grandma. She'll be back to get you just like she does every day."
Repeat activities so children can master skills and experience success.	"It's time to get ready for lunch, now, so we have to clean up. You can get the bean bags and basket out again later and continue your game."
Consider children's individual characteristics when setting up the environment, choosing materials, and planning activities.	"Now that we've rearranged the room we need to measure the traffic paths to make sure there's room for Frankie's wheelchair."

Ms. Williams observes Mark in the table toy area selecting a new truck puzzle that has 18 pieces. Ten minutes later, she notices that Mark is no longer at the puzzle table, but the puzzle pieces are all over the table. Ms. Williams finds Mark in the book corner and says, "Mark, it looks like that new truck puzzle was hard to do. If you come back to the puzzle table, we can work on the puzzle together. New puzzles with lots of pieces are hard to do at first. I bet after you try a couple of times you'll be able to do it alone." Mark and Ms. Williams return to the puzzle table. They talk about the puzzle pieces—where the wheels belong, the cab of the truck, the driver, and so on—until the entire puzzle is put together.

1. **Why did Ms. Williams encourage Mark to come back to complete the puzzle?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams support Mark's positive feelings about himself?**

Your Own Sense of Self

The more you know about yourself, the more you can help children develop a sense of self and self-esteem. Think about your likes, dislikes, learning style, opinions, and feelings. How do your past experiences—culture, home life, school experiences, successes, failures—affect your understanding of individual children? Do you sometimes make inaccurate assumptions about children whose characteristics and experiences differ from yours?

Here are some questions to help you reflect on your childhood experiences. As you answer them, think about how these experiences might influence your views and behaviors today.[2]

What messages did your family and community deliver concerning accepted behaviors? (For example, were children allowed to be noisy and physically active, could they look adults directly in the eye when being spoken to? Was it okay for boys to cry or girls to play "rough?")

What messages did you receive about using your talents? Were there different expectations and treatment of boys and girls? (For example, was it acceptable to be "smart," "athletic," or "artistic?")

How and when were you expected to express your ideas and feelings? (For example, were children encouraged to speak up? Was it all right to speak when others were speaking? Did everyone talk at the same time?)

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[2] Adapted with permission from Diane Trister Dodge, Judy R. Jablon, and Toni S. Bickart, *Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1994), pp. 213-214.

How was your racial/ethnic identify described to you? Were any characteristics of your group identified as special? What messages did you receive about the characteristics of other ethnic groups?

What messages did you get from the media concerning different groups of people? How have those messages influenced your opinions and behaviors?

What messages did you receive from school, community, and peers about your family's socio-economic position? (For example, were certain behaviors expected of children based on where they lived or their parents' occupations?)

What types of exposure did you have to people with mental or physical disabilities? (For example, did you attend school with children with disabilities? What words were used to describe people with disabilities?)

We can choose to keep or change our beliefs and behaviors.

As you recalled your childhood experiences and what was valued in your home and community, you probably came to realize that your values have changed over time. You may see how your experiences (or lack of experiences) with people of diverse backgrounds have helped to shape your views and interactions with people today. With this awareness, you can make a conscious decision to keep those beliefs and behaviors that match your current experiences and change those that don't.

At times, you may want to question and challenge your attitudes and beliefs. You might ask yourself: "Why am I uncomfortable around people with disabilities? Why do I think they are different? Have I really ever known someone who had a disability?"

Some people find they frequently have the same strong reactions to certain situations. In these cases, it is important to reflect on what's causing your response. Here is an example.

> Ms. Trent gets really upset when girls won't join in outdoor activities. She believes that it is important for boys and girls to participate in all activities. She observes that Maya always looks like she wants to participate, but something seems to stop her from running, climbing, and riding. She wonders to herself, "Could Maya's behavior reflect a cultural expectation that I'm not aware of?" She discusses her observations with a colleague to get a fresh view and talks with Maya's family about their expectations for their child's behavior. This research helps Ms. Trent understand Maya's behavior. Her parents have told her to keep her clothes clean while at the program. Ms. Trent works with the family to reach a compromise that respects their values and allows Maya to benefit from the program's activities. Maya will wear play clothes to the program so she won't have to worry about keeping them clean.

Ms. Trent reflected on her own behavior. When we take time to think about the reasons for our behaviors, we become more skilled at understanding ourselves and why children may behave in certain ways.

Adults can help children understand that all people are alike and different in many ways.

With greater personal awareness, you will be able to help children accept and appreciate their own individual characteristics. You can help them identify with and feel positive about their own families, culture, ethnicity, and home language. With your support they will learn that there is a place for everyone in the group and that people are alike and different in many ways. How you interact and respond to children conveys your respect and acceptance of them. Respect and acceptance are what most children and adults ultimately want from others.

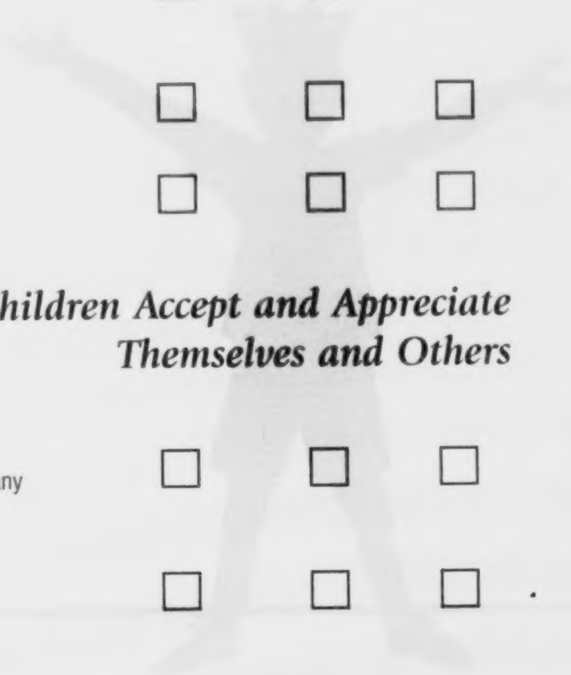
When you have finished this overview section, complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of the module if you need definitions of the terms used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills teachers use to foster children's sense of self and self-esteem. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Developing a Positive and Supportive Relationship with Each Child

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Observe each child regularly to learn about individual needs, skills, abilities, interests, culture, and family experiences.	☐	☐	☐
2. Encourage children to talk about their feelings and take their concerns seriously.	☐	☐	☐
3. Learn and use words in the home language of children whose first language is not English.	☐	☐	☐
4. Know what each child can do and show that you think each child is special.	☐	☐	☐
5. Offer verbal and gentle nonverbal contact—a hug, a touch, a smile—to show you care.	☐	☐	☐
6. Spend individual time with each child every day.	☐	☐	☐



Helping Children Accept and Appreciate Themselves and Others

7. Provide a variety of activities and materials that encourage all children to participate. Avoid making biased remarks concerning gender, disabilities, culture, ethnic background, or any other differences.	☐	☐	☐
8. Acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Accept and Appreciate Themselves and Others

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
9. Display pictures of their families and offer homelike materials and activities to help children feel secure.	☐	☐	☐
10. Show by what you say and do that you respect each child.	☐	☐	☐
11. Reinforce children's behavior when they share, cooperate, or help others.	☐	☐	☐
12. Make sure the environment and activities reflect the cultures of all children in the group, and help children learn about and appreciate a wide variety of cultures and ethnic groups.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Opportunities for Children to Be Successful and Feel Competent

13. Encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves, even if this takes a long time. Provide help only when asked or when a child is anxious.	☐	☐	☐
14. Accept mistakes as a natural part of learning to do something new.	☐	☐	☐
15. Provide a range of activities and materials that can be enjoyed by children with different interests, abilities, and skill levels.	☐	☐	☐
16. Help children learn how to solve their own problems.	☐	☐	☐
17. Help children handle their feelings about separating from their families.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Opportunities for Children to Be Successful and Feel Competent

(Continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
18. Repeat activities so children can master skills and experience success.	☐	☐	☐
19. Consider children's individual characteristics when setting up the environment, choosing materials, and planning activities.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 8: Self.

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Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical characteristics of preschool children
- Use what you know about children to promote a positive sense of self

Socio-emotional development is the foundation for self-esteem. At every stage of life, children (and adults) must deal with age-specific challenges before they move on to the next stage. If these challenges are handled successfully, children's socio-emotional development is enhanced.

Psychologist Erik Erikson has outlined eight stages of socio-emotional development from infancy to old age. Erikson's first stage of development is **trust**. Infants develop a sense of trust when the adults who care for them respond quickly to their basic needs. Responsive adults help infants to trust their world and feel safe. Trust is essential as infants begin to explore the environment, try new activities, develop new skills, and interact with others. Establishing a sense of trust is essential to the development of autonomy, which generally occurs during the toddler years.

Infants and toddlers are building trust and autonomy.

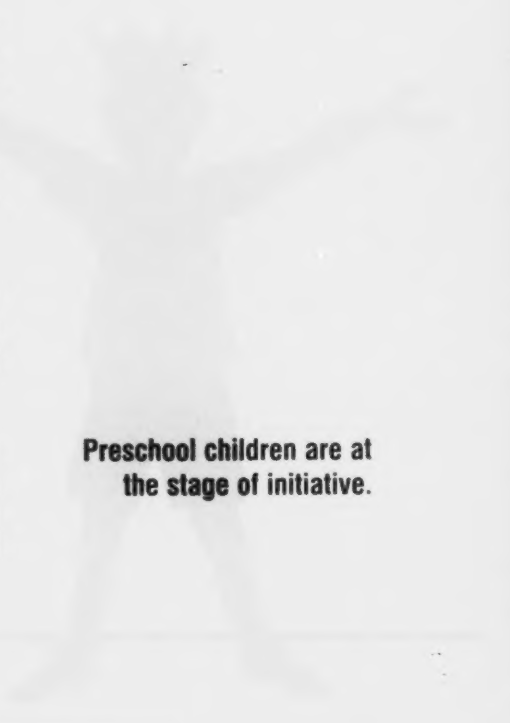
Autonomy is about being independent, doing things for oneself, making decisions, and exploring the world. As toddlers assert their growing independence, they like to say "no" and insist on doing everything themselves. Autonomy is essential to the development of initiative, which generally occurs during the preschool years.

Initiative is the term Erikson uses to describe the preschool years. Three- to five-year-olds tend to be active, talkative, creative, and eager to learn and have new experiences.

Erikson's last four stages cover the school-age years, adolescence, maturity, and old age. They focus on industry, intimacy, the ability to reach out to others, and reflecting on one's life. Erikson's message is that socio-emotional development continues throughout our lives.

Preschool children seem to have endless energy. They can build, draw, mold, paint, climb, and swing with increasing skill. If you encourage them to explore, solve problems, and do things for themselves, they will show initiative. Their sense of self and their confidence in what they can do will grow as their knowledge and skills increase.

Preschool children are at the stage of initiative.



Most preschool children talk a lot. They usually know many words, and they can express their ideas verbally. They ask "why" and "what" and how" questions because they want to know more about their world.

Preschool children tend to be social. They play with other children and develop strong friendships. They notice how people are alike and different and are curious about these differences. Dramatic play is a favorite activity. By watching children play, you can learn a lot about what they know and how they view their experiences.

When activities are matched to children's abilities, they develop self-confidence.

Sometimes adults try to push children into academic learning too early. They teach letters and numbers so children will be "ready" for first grade. If preschool children are pushed to do things before they are ready, they may experience failure, and as a result, their self-esteem will suffer. Rather, teachers should offer children many opportunities to learn through play. Preschool children need activities that allow them to succeed easily and feel good about themselves. In this way they develop self-esteem.

Conversely, sometimes teachers aren't aware of how capable preschool children are. They may continue to help children eat, dress, and use the toilet even when children can do these things for themselves. It is important to let children do as much as possible for themselves, so that they become aware of their abilities and feel competent. Teachers can provide help when asked or when adult assistance would calm an anxious child and lead to success.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next two pages identifies some typical behaviors of children in the preschool years, ages three to five. Included are behaviors relevant to developing a positive sense of self. The right-hand column asks you to identify ways teachers can use this information to foster children's sense of self and self-esteem. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module, you will learn new strategies and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at once. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed charts at the end of the module. By the time you complete this module, you will find you know many ways to foster children's self-esteem.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Foster Self-Esteem
They are eager to please adults and may seek approval and attention.	*Join in children's play and work with them during clean-up. Offer specific, targeted encouragement for "real" efforts and accomplishments. Acknowledge children's requests for your approval and attention, even if you must ask them to wait for a few minutes until you are available. Help children learn to value their own skills and abilities.*
They may be fearful of such things as loud noises, monsters, the dark, animals, or some people.	
They can feed, dress, and do many things for themselves.	
They usually have mastered independent use of the toilet and can ask to use the bathroom (if it isn't in the room).	
They like to help during chores and routines.	
They like to play make-believe and act out roles.	
They can take turns and share, but they don't always want to.	

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Foster Self-Esteem**
They can express feelings verbally using large vocabularies but may also stutter or use "baby talk."	
They have strong emotions.	
They may express feelings such as anger and jealousy by hitting or kicking.	
They have a great deal of physical energy.	
They like to try new things and to take risks.	
They know their names and ages and can identify with their own gender, family, culture, community, and ethnic group.	
They may have difficulty making the transition from home to school.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of ways teachers can promote children's sense of self and self-esteem.

II. Getting to Know Each Child

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize and understand children's individual characteristics
- Observe children carefully and regularly to get to know what makes each one unique

Each child is a unique human being. By getting to know children, you demonstrate respect and appreciation for their unique characteristics. When you plan a program that responds to children's individual characteristics—needs, interests, skills, temperament, culture, language—you help children learn to respect and value themselves. Self-respect and appreciation of one's individual characteristics and abilities are the essence of self-esteem.

Although most children pass through the same stages of development in the same order, each child develops according to an individual time line which can be faster or slower than the average for a specific age group. In addition, children's development is uneven—a child may be more advanced than her age-mates in one area (for example, riding a tricycle before most of her classmates have mastered this skill) and less advanced in another (for example, developing classification skills after most of her peers). It is important to use the stages of development as guidelines, while remembering that within any age group there can be great variation.

Your own experiences as a child, as a teacher, and perhaps as a parent can affect your expectations of children's behavior. For example, you may have strong memories of your own childhood and how you and your siblings felt and behaved in different situations. A child in your program may remind you of nieces or nephews, children you worked with in past years, or a childhood friend. In addition, if you are a person who usually prefers quiet activities you may find it hard to understand a child who is happiest when fully involved—physically, cognitively, and emotionally—in routines and activities. You will need to spend more time getting to know that child so you can respond in supportive ways.

Your experiences can influence how you view children in the program.

To get beyond preconceived notions of how a child might feel or what he or she may need, it is important to get to know each child as an individual. Here are some examples of the ways in which children can differ:

It is important to learn what makes each child unique.

Adaptability. Rico loves to try new foods. Amy prefers to fill up on familiar items instead. Tiffany adjusts easily when a sudden thunderstorm prevents the class from going on a planned nature walk, but Leona keeps asking when the rain will stop.

Activity Levels. Stuart is constantly moving. He runs more often than he walks, and he throws his whole body into every activity. Barney is usually content to play quietly while watching what's going on around him.

Regularity of Body Rhythms. Some children function most effectively when routines—eating meals and snacks, resting, using the bathroom—occur at the same time each day. Children who have less predictable body rhythms need flexible schedules for routines.

Intensity. Some children express their emotions quietly, others with great gusto. Lynn raises her voice and moves her body when she is excited or happy, while Tracy smiles and speaks in muted tones.

Distractibility. Deisy can focus on what she's doing without being distracted by a slamming door or other children's conversations and activities. She can fall asleep easily no matter what else is going on in the room. Gerard frequently leaves buildings, pictures, and puzzles unfinished and finds it hard to fall asleep unless his cot is in a protected corner of the room.

Persistence. T. J. can spend long periods of time building a block tower or learning something new, such as using an egg beater. Carrie needs encouragement to take on a new challenge or to stick with a difficult task.

The differences described above are neither good nor bad traits. They simply describe the different ways children (and adults) may respond to people and experiences in their lives. As you get to know each child, keep these characteristics in mind. You can use the information you collect as you plan and implement a program that responds to children as individuals.

Try these suggestions.

Here are several suggestions to help you get to know and understand each child.

Communicate frequently with children's families. Effective early childhood programs involve families as partners. Children's sense of self is rooted in their relationships with parents and other family members. Make it a point to share information with parents frequently. Ask them to keep you up-to-date about their child's experiences and activities at home and in the community.

Accept and respect individual differences without trying to change children. Children need to know that other people accept them in order to learn to value themselves. Feelings of self-worth allow children to accept and respect others.

Observe children frequently, especially those who are difficult for you to understand or with whom you find it hard to work. Record a child's behavior for five minutes, several times a day for a week. Review your observation notes and ask yourself what the child might be feeling and thinking. Look for patterns that give you insight into the child's behavior.

Be aware of your own style and preferences. Are you a person who likes a lot of physical contact? Do you prefer quiet times, or do you enjoy excitement? Are you slow to get angry? Are your feelings hurt easily? How does your own style affect your relationships with children?

Ask a colleague, your supervisor, or your trainer to observe a child whose behavior you do not understand or are having trouble handling. Compare and discuss the observation notes. Often a fresh perspective leads to greater awareness of the reasons for a child's behavior.

Building relationships with children is part of being a professional. You may enjoy being with some children more than with others, and find some children harder to get to know. Make it a point to spend individual time regularly with every child in the group. Challenge yourself to find something special about each child that may not have been obvious at first.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will learn more about the individual characteristics of two children by completing a five- to ten-minute observation of each child. (You might want to read Module 12, Program Management, Learning Activity I, "Using a Systematic Approach to Observing and Recording.") Begin by reading the example below. Then select two children to observe indoors or outdoors as they engage in play or routines. During the observations, make quick notes about what the child does and says, who the child talks and plays with, and how his or her facial expressions change. After the observations, spend a few minutes adding any details you left out. Review your notes and think about what you learned about each child. Then answer the questions on the blank forms that follow.

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Getting to Know a Child

(Example)

Child: *Cynthia* **Age:** *4 years, 3 months* **Date:** *January 10*

Setting: *House Corner* **Time:** *10:45 a.m.*

Observation Notes

Cynthia is alone. She puts on the firefighter hat and raincoat. She says, "I have to make my lunch and eat it fast. I have to get to the fire station in a hurry." She gets pots from the shelf and puts them on the stove. She puts playdough pieces in the pots. She stands at the stove and sings a song:

Firefighter, Firefighter, put on your boots!

Firefighter, Firefighter, put on your coat.

She removes the pots from the stove, puts the playdough on plates, and sits at the table smiling. She pretends to eat, puts the dishes in the sink, and quickly walks to the block corner.

What do you think the child was feeling?

Cynthia smiled and sang as she played. She appears to be happy today. She feels good about cooking her lunch and being a firefighter.

What did you learn about the child that might affect her sense of self?

Cynthia seems to enjoy acting out roles. She may have been thinking about cooking for herself. She pretended she was a firefighter preparing to go to work. She is happy when she is busy. Also, she memorized a song.

How can you use this information to foster self-esteem?

Put additional firefighter props in the house corner and block area.

Sing the firefighter song with her

Mention during group time that Cynthia seems to like this song.

Talk with her during free play about things a firefighter does.

Include her in our next cooking project.

Watch to see when she might be ready to join other children in dramatic play.

Getting to Know a Child

Child #1: ______________ **Age:** ______________ **Date:** ______________

Setting: ______________________________ **Time:** ______________

Observation Notes

What do you think the child was feeling?

What did you learn about the child that might affect his or her sense of self?

How can you use this information to foster self-esteem?

Getting to Know a Child

Child #2: ____________ **Age:** ____________ **Date:** ____________

Setting: ________________________ **Time:** ____________

Observation Notes

What do you think the child was feeling?

What did you learn about the child that might affect his or her sense of self?

How can you use this information to foster self-esteem?

Use your notes from both observations to answer the following questions.

How are these two children similar?

How are these two children different?

Based on your observation notes, what else would you like to know about these children?

There are numerous methods for continuing to get to know and understand children. You can conduct regular, systematic observations, use checklists, keep anecdotal records, and share and discuss information about the child's activities and experiences with parents and colleagues. In the next activity you will learn how to use what you know about the children to promote a sense of competence.

III. Responding to Each Child as an Individual

In this activity you will learn to:

- Plan an environment and activities that match children's interests and abilities
- Interact with children in ways that build their sense of competence

Preschool children are developing physical, cognitive, and social skills they will use throughout their lives. Every day they are learning new skills, developing new interests, and gaining a greater understanding of their world. As children acquire new skills, they develop a sense of their own competence—what they are capable of doing—that contributes to self-esteem. You can help children feel capable by creating an appropriate environment, planning for individual abilities and interests, and tailoring your support to match individual needs. In a safe and accepting atmosphere, children can practice skills they already have and learn new ones.

The Environment

The indoor and outdoor environment includes a number of elements—furniture, equipment, interest areas, materials, the daily schedule. Teachers can help children feel competent by considering children's individual and developmental interests when planning for these elements. The more children can explore the environment, use materials, and do things on their own, the more they will be proud of themselves. Their self-esteem grows with their increasing independence and their sense of competence.

Materials should offer choices and encourage children to develop and use skills.

The inventory of materials in each classroom should offer a variety of interesting experiences without overwhelming children with too many choices. Too many materials can lead to confusion. Too few can cause disagreements or boredom. The key is to provide the right number of toys and other items that respond to children's skills and interests.

The furniture and equipment must be the right size, sturdy, safe, and age-appropriate. If these items are too small or too large for preschoolers, you will be constantly reminding children to be careful or to keep off. Children will not be challenged to learn new skills.

Interest areas should be stocked with toys and materials that match children's skill levels and are safe and in good repair. When items are too simple or too difficult, are broken, or have missing pieces, children are likely to become frustrated and may misuse them.

Sometimes adults expect too much from preschool children. When they see a child successfully complete a five-piece puzzle, they put out one with twenty-five pieces. When a child can paint at the easel with one color, they think he or she can handle five colors. Given toys and materials that are too difficult, children are likely to fail, which lowers their self-esteem. Therefore, consider children's skills and abilities when selecting materials. Provide materials that offer children challenges while also allowing them to experience success.

Children feel independent and proud when they have access to play materials.

Everything should have a place in a preschool room. Displaying materials on low shelves labeled with pictures of the materials allows children to find and return the things they need. When children have access to materials, they feel independent because they don't have to rely on adults. They learn to make choices for themselves and to take care of their environment. The more children can explore the interest areas, make and carry out plans, and use their developing skills on their own, the more pride they will have in themselves.

A well-planned schedule and routines encourage children's full involvement in the program.

The daily schedule, including how routines are handled, can also contribute to promoting a sense of competence. A schedule with many opportunities for children to choose what they want to do—and with whom—encourages independence and decision making. An appropriate schedule includes long blocks of time during which children can carry out their plans and become fully involved in activities. Most preschool children participate in routines. They like doing "real" work and feel proud of their contributions to making the classroom run smoothly. Look at your approach to carrying out routines (such as preparing snack or getting ready to go outdoors) to make sure you are encouraging children to do as much as they can without your help. Also, remember to invite children to help with jobs such as washing paintbrushes or restocking the paper towel supply.

You and your colleagues are the most important parts of the environment. Your knowledge of child development and each child's individual characteristics enables you to plan activities and provide materials that are at the right level—challenging but not overwhelming. The children who grow to trust you will be free to explore and learn, thereby building trust in themselves and their abilities.

Individual Abilities and Interests

Children in the preschool years have a wide range of interests and abilities. It is important to provide materials, equipment, and activities that represent this range. For example, you can set up the art area so one easel has only one or two colors of paint and wide brushes, while another has five colors and brushes in several widths. Puzzles and manipulatives can range from the simple to the complex. Books can include those that are mostly pictures as well as those with several sentences on every page.

Provide open-ended materials that respond to a wide range of interests and abilities.

One way to accommodate a range of abilities and interests is to provide open-ended materials. Open-ended materials are ones that can be used in various ways by children at different stages of development. As children develop new skills, they find new ways to successfully explore and use open-ended materials. Teachers can offer items to respond to children's interests and expand their play. For example, putting zoo animals in the block area might encourage children to build a zoo. Offering cake pans and aprons in the dramatic play area could lead children to create a bake shop.

It's important to include toys and materials that reflect children's homes, cultural backgrounds, languages, and individual interests. Children tend to feel secure and accepted when books, pictures, dolls, music, and other items reflect them and their backgrounds. They will see themselves reflected in the environment.

The activities you plan can also foster self-esteem. Getting to know children through observation and by talking with parents and colleagues helps you discover their special interests and abilities. When you plan an activity you know will interest a child or build on his or her skills, you are saying to that child, "You are important to me and I know you will like this."

The Right Level of Support

One of the hardest things to know is when to offer help to a child attempting something new and when to withdraw this support gradually so the child can manage independently. As a teacher, you use your knowledge of individual capabilities and limitations to provide the right kind of support and guidance as children approach new tasks.

Offer support in a way that matches children's needs and skills.

Observe children closely so you will know who needs support throughout the learning process, who needs words of encouragement, and who simply needs you to nod or smile at them as they try a new activity. If you intervene only when necessary, you help children acquire new skills in a way that builds their sense of competence.

In the following example, the teacher uses knowledge of each child to tailor her approach to providing support.

> Ms. Henry has ordered a new indoor climber to be delivered to her room. She knows that the children's reactions to the new equipment will be as varied as their abilities to climb and jump. Cheryl is very curious, but may be timid about trying the climber. To support her, Ms. Henry displays pictures of the climber and talks about how children can use it. Bonita and Dean are both risk-takers. They will be excited about the climber and may take too many chances. To meet their needs, Ms. Henry discusses safety limits and provides ongoing guidance to encourage their safe play. Marguerite and Lloyd may take a long time to adjust to the new climber. The group time discussion might make them more fearful. Ms. Henry plans to talk to these children individually so she can reassure them that they are capable of climbing safely. She will stay with them at the climber for as long as they need her support.

You and your colleagues probably spend much of your day doing things for children that they cannot do for themselves. It is important, however, to recognize when children are ready to help themselves and to provide opportunities for them to be successful and feel competent. For example, you might help three-year-old Sara climb up the slide while holding her hand; encourage four-year-old Andy to try a puzzle he's never done before; or put some sturdy plastic knives next to the peanut butter and crackers so all the children can make their own snacks. Children feel good about themselves when they can practice skills they already have and learn new skills in a safe and accepting atmosphere.

Provide many opportunities for children to feel successful and competent.

The children in your program will change a great deal during the year. In fact, they change each day as they develop physically, cognitively, and socially; learn new skills; and develop new interests. To promote children's sense of competence, observe them frequently and change the environment as well as your approach to offering support and guidance to reflect children's new abilities and interests.

Applying Your Knowledge

The previous activity focused on getting to know two children. In this activity you will continue observing the same two children and record what you learned. You will then use this information to help each child develop a sense of competence. Begin by reviewing your observation notes and responses to the questions posed in Learning Activity II. Then read the example that follows and complete a blank form for each of the two children.

Responding to Each Child as an Individual

(Example)

Child: *Cynthia* **Age:** *4 years, 3 months* **Dates:** *January 15—19*

What You Learned About This Child	How You Can Encourage Competence
What does this child like to do on arrival? *Quiet activities. Looks at books or does simple puzzles.*	*Read to her. Ask her parents for suggestions of types of books to match her interests. Point out more difficult puzzles.*
Who does this child play with? Who initiates the play—this child, or others? *Kim and Joey. They ask her, then she joins in. All three are quiet children.*	*Set up activities for the three of them, such as playing with new props in the block area.*
What skills has this child recently learned? *She used to play alone. Now she plays and shares toys and props with one or two others.*	*Comment on her play with other children. Provide new dress-up clothes to expand play.*
What are this child's self-help skills? *She can button and zip and loves to help with chores. She's learning to twist her laces, trying to make a knot.*	*Ask her to help others learn to zip and button. Suggest making knots on the lacing board. Ask her parents to help her practice lacing at home.*
What does this child like to do outdoors? *She plays quietly in the sandbox, sometimes with Kim and Joey. She says she likes to ride a tricycle, but rarely asks for a turn.*	*Comment on her group play in the sandbox. Help her learn how to use words to tell other children she wants to use the trike next.*
What does this child do very well? *She remembers stories that we've read and can repeat them as she looks at books.*	*Ask questions such as: "What do you think is going to happen next?" and "What if . . .?"*
What does this child do at the end of the day? *She "reads" to Kim and Joey, who get tired and ask her to read to them.*	*Ask her to "read" to a small group of children. Also, let her read or play alone.*

Responding to Each Child as an Individual

Child #1: ______________________ **Age:** ______________________ **Dates:** ________

What You Learned About This Child	How You Can Encourage Competence
What does this child like to do on arrival?	
Who does this child play with? Who initiates the play—this child, or others?	
What skills has this child recently learned?	
What are this child's self-help skills?	
What does this child like to do outdoors?	
What does this child do very well?	
What does this child do at the end of the day?	

Responding to Each Child as an Individual

Child #2: ______________________ **Age:** ______________________ **Dates:** ________

What You Learned About This Child	How You Can Encourage Competence
What does this child like to do on arrival?	
Who does this child play with? Who initiates the play—this child, or others?	
What skills has this child recently learned?	
What are this child's self-help skills?	
What does this child like to do outdoors?	
What does this child do very well?	
What does this child do at the end of the day?	

Discuss this activity with your colleagues. Plan ways to respond to each child through the environment, activities, and interactions.

IV. Helping Children Deal with Separation

In this activity you will learn to:

- Observe how individual children react to being separated from their families
- Communicate with children in ways that help them deal with separation
- Provide an environment that helps children deal with separation

Each day at your center begins with families and children saying goodbye to each other. This can evoke deep feelings in both adults and children. Consider how you feel when you must say goodbye to someone you love: Sad? Angry? Guilty? Afraid? Parents and children have these feelings too. It can be tempting to get separations over as quickly as possible.

Separation is a lifelong experience and an important part of growing up. It deserves the same careful planning as every other aspect of your program. When you help children deal with their feelings about separation, they learn they are capable of handling painful feelings. They also learn that you, someone they trust, will be there if they need help.

Children deal with separation in different ways.

Although preschool children vary in their ability to deal with their feelings, most can understand and accept separation. At this age, children can create a mental picture of their absent parents. Also, they understand their teacher's explanation of where their parents have gone and when they will be back to pick them up. "Grandma went to her job at the airport. She'll see you at home tonight. Your dad will pick you up this afternoon after our outdoor play time."

Some preschool children have great difficulty separating from their parents. These difficulties may be expressed in different ways.

- Vanessa stopped sucking her thumb last year but began again when she started coming to the center. Thumb-sucking helped cope with her feelings about missing her mother.
- Although Felipe seemed to adjust easily to his new life at the center, his mother reported that he had been wetting his bed at night. He expressed fears about separation in a familiar home setting rather than at the center.
- Four-year-old Cheryl has been dressing herself for more than a year. She has been coming to the center for three weeks. Her mother says that Cheryl tells her in the morning, "I can't get my clothes on today, so I can't go to school." Cheryl knows that she can't go to the center if she doesn't have clothes on.

- Peter brought his large teddy bear to the center today. He has been carrying it around all day. It's so big that it gets in the way of anything he tries to play with. But his need to feel connected with home and his parents is greater than his need to move freely.

Occasionally, children revert to behaviors more typical of infants or toddlers in reaction to being separated from their families. As the examples have shown, one child might suck her thumb; another might have toileting accidents. It's best to take these incidents in stride without paying undue attention to them. Instead, recognize the behaviors as signs that the child needs your help to handle strong feelings about separation.

Try these suggestions.

Here are some suggestions for helping children handle separation in ways that also foster a sense of competence and self-esteem.

Examine your own feelings about separation. What good and bad separation experiences do you remember from your childhood? How do your feel about parents saying goodbye and leaving their children with you for the day? How do your feelings influence your responses to parents and children? "When Brenda says she misses her Mom, it reminds me of how much I missed my parents when they went on trips without me."

Encourage activities that help children gain a sense of mastery over separation. Children often express their feelings about separation through dramatic play, art, and the books they choose to "read." Provide dress-up clothes and props such as hats, briefcases, and empty food containers. Children can use these items to role-play situations where people leave and come back, such as going to work and to the grocery store. These make-believe activities help children handle their fearful feelings. Give children lots of time for art, and read books such as *Goodnight Moon* and *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown, or *Ira Sleeps Over* by E. Waber—three favorites.

Help children become aware of the daily schedule. A predictable and consistent order of events gives children a sense of security. When children understand the daily schedule, they are better able to determine when their parents will return to take them home. Make a picture version of the schedule using drawings and photographs. Explain the pictures: "Here we are waking up from our naps. Then we eat snack. Then we play outside for a while. When we come in it's almost time for your parents to come."

Encourage children to help during daily routines and activities. Children gain self-confidence as they pour juice, tie shoe laces, and select and replace their own materials. They also learn to cope with separation. They feel important and valued at the center, even though their parents are absent.

Make the environment as home-like as possible. Encourage parents to bring a child's special blanket or stuffed animal from home. Provide private spaces for children to store their possessions. Hang pictures of families to help children feel connected to their parents even when they are away. Use family recipes in cooking activities to make the center more home-like. Make a parent mailbox so children can "write" letters to their parents during the day.

Listen as children express their feelings. Sharing feelings makes them more manageable. Though you may not like to hear complaining or crying, when you listen, you show respect. You help children learn that you will be available to listen to their feelings.

Talk with children about their parents during the day. Look at family pictures. Encourage children to make pretend calls to their parents. Comments such as "did your mom put that bow in your hair?" or "tell me about helping your dad cook dinner" can help children feel connected to their families.

Building partnerships with families helps children cope with separation.

One of the most important ways you can help children cope with separation is to build strong partnerships with families. Get to know children's parents and plan ways to work together to support their children. Encourage parents to visit the center or participate in other ways. If parents trust and value the work you and your colleagues do, their children will sense this and feel more secure. "Delante was glad to see you at lunch time. He was sad for a little while when you left, but then we talked about what to have for lunch the next time you come. He says that your favorite food is pizza!"

Help parents foster their child's trust by saying goodbye directly to the child.

Some parents may find it tempting to sneak out of the room while their child is looking the other way. Though it may seem the easiest thing to do, imagine how you would feel if the most important person in your life disappeared with no warning. Saying goodbye gives children the security of knowing they can count on their parents to let them know what is happening. Try to explain to parents how their children might be feeling. "I'm sure it's really hard to say goodbye to Tyler when he has tears rolling down his face. When you give him a hug and tell him you will see him soon, he may still feel sad, but he knows that you love him and will come back for him." Some families develop goodbye rituals with their children. The familiar actions of having a giant hug or blowing kisses to each other are reassuring and can give children a sense of control. It is easier to deal with open feelings than ones that are bottled up inside.

Help parents understand confusing end-of-day behaviors.

Reunions are the other side of separating. Some days children run gleefully into their parents' arms because they are ready to go home. Other days they have ambivalent feelings. They may burst out in tears, have a tantrum about getting their coats on, or complain about something that happened in the day—an event they haven't mentioned earlier. Help parents understand that children sometimes save their deepest feelings for them—the people they trust the most.

Teachers' visits to the children's homes also can help children deal with separation. The teacher can see the child's home environment, how the child behaves in a different setting, how the adult family members interact with the child, the role of siblings, and so on. After a visit from their teacher, many children feel a greater connection between home and center and are more comfortable spending time at the center.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will identify the ways two children cope with separation. First, review the example that follows. Then choose two children in your care whom you think are very different from each other. Use what you have learned in this module and what you know about these children to complete the questions on the blank chart.

Helping Children Deal with Separation

(Example)

	Child/Age: *Tony, 3-1/2 years*	**Child/Age:** *George, 4 years*
How does this child say goodbye to his or her parents in the morning?	*He holds on to his mother for a few minutes. She helps him hang up his coat and sits with him in the book area until she leaves for work.*	*His father asks him what he's going to play with first. George usually says blocks," and takes his father to the block corner. His father watches for a few minutes and says goodbye.*
What kinds of make-believe does this child engage in?	*Usually scenes from home—cooking, cleaning, eating. Sometimes he plays grocery store—that's where his mother works.*	*He likes to be a police officer directing traffic. Sometimes he's a daddy in the house corner.*
How does this child use art materials to express feelings?	*He likes "soothing art"—he finger paints carefully and smoothly.*	*He's quick. He makes broad brush strokes up and down and side to side when he's feeling angry or sad.*
How do you know this child is thinking about his or her family?	*He points at the photo of his family. He pretends to call his parents on the phone. He strokes his stuffed bunny.*	*He doesn't talk about his family very much. When we talk about families at group time, he joins in.*
How does this child help with daily routines?	*He likes to sweep. He's very serious about his work.*	*Sweeping doesn't interest George—he gets bored before he's done. He does well stacking the cots after naptime.*
How could you help this child deal with feelings about separation?	*Read to him after his mother leaves and at the end of the day. Encourage him to try water play when he seems sad.*	*Ask him about things he does with his parents and sisters. Use family pictures to talk about where they are when George is at the center.*

Helping Children Deal with Separation

	Child/Age:	**Child/Age:**
How does this child say goodbye to his or her parents in the morning?		
What kinds of make-believe does this child engage in?		
How does this child use art materials to express feelings?		
How do you know this child is thinking about his or her family?		
How does this child help with daily routines?		
How could you help this child deal with feelings about separation?		

Discuss your responses with your trainer and the parents of the two children.

V. Using Caring Words that Help Foster Self-Esteem

In this activity you will learn to:

- Listen carefully to children to find out what they are saying and feeling
- Talk to children in ways that demonstrate understanding and respect

The words you use can show children that you respect them.

Most preschool children can use words to express their thoughts and feelings. Some children are very good at using words; others need your help. As a teacher you provide a model for children. Children listen to what you say and try to understand your meaning. The words you use teach them a great deal about themselves. When those words are caring, they help a child feel valued and respected.

Talking with children in ways that build self-esteem requires two special skills. First, a teacher must listen carefully and determine what the child is really saying through words and/or actions—and what he or she is feeling. By looking at and listening to a child and thinking about your own experiences, you can often tell how the child feels. Second, a teacher must respond so that the child knows that he or she is understood and respected.

Give your full attention to children and listen carefully to what they are saying.

It is important to talk to children using the same courteous voice you use with your friends and family. Begin by giving the child your full attention. Stand near the child and establish eye contact. Listen and observe carefully so you can determine what he or she is really saying and feeling. An example follows.

> Ms. Ferraro watched and listened to four-year-old James, who was new to the center. James looked at the children's paintings hanging in the art area and said, "These sure are ugly pictures." Ms. Ferraro said, "We let children paint all kinds of pictures here. All children paint in their own way, and they can hang up their pictures if they want to. When you want to paint I'll help you find a smock and an empty easel."

Ms. Ferraro guessed that James was wondering about how his paintings would turn out. He was worried that his pictures would not be acceptable. He expressed his worry by calling the paintings on the wall ugly. In this situation Ms. Ferraro listened carefully to what James said and tried to figure out what he was feeling. Her response showed James that she respected his concern about being able to paint and understood his worried feelings.

If Ms. Ferraro had not developed skills in listening and talking with children, she might have said, "These pictures aren't ugly. It isn't nice to say that about the other children's work." This statement would have made James feel bad. It would have left him worried about this own painting ability.

Arrival time is an opportunity to say something special about each child.

When you greet children each morning, you set the tone for their day. By saying something special about each child, you show that you notice and care for each one. Your caring words are also important to the parents who bring their children to your room. Here are some examples of what you might say when greeting children and their parents.

- "You're the first to arrive today. You and I can spend some quiet time together. Would you like to choose a book to read?"
- "Raoul, I see you smiling this morning. Are you looking forward to playing in the loft again today while your daddy goes to work?"
- "Julia, is this your Grandpa Fred whom I heard so much about? I know you're really happy he came to visit."

Children may translate an adult's angry words into negative feelings about themselves.

Sometimes adults lose control, take out their anger on children, or fail to pay attention to a child's needs. These behaviors can make children question their own worth. They may think our words carry more meaning than we intend. When a child hears an angry or thoughtless statement: "Can't you sit still and listen?"—he or she may translate the words into a negative self-image—"I am a bad person because I can't sit still." Words that demonstrate respect and caring help foster a child's positive sense of self. "I can see you are having trouble sitting still. Would you like to do something else?" Children are very sensitive to adult opinions. Your "language environment" is as important as the physical environment.

Using caring words takes some practice. It may be a while before new ways of talking to children feel natural. You will be rewarded when the children you care for let you know how much better they feel because of your understanding and care.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you read several examples of how to talk to children in different situations. Then you write down what you might say in typical situations to show respect for children. If possible, tape record or videotape yourself talking with children to learn more about how your interactions affect a child's positive sense of self.

Using Caring Words
(Example)

What do you say when a child calls another child or an adult a name, such as *fat* or *stupid*?

> *"We don't call people names here, Carol. We just use each other's real names. Kent is not stupid, and neither are you. He is playing in his own way, just like you do. Both ways are fine."*

What do you say when a child knocks down something another child is building or tries to destroy another child's work?

> *"Scott, you have just knocked down the building that Monica worked so hard to build. It's okay to be angry but it's not okay to destroy someone else's work. Monica, you need to tell Scott how you feel. Scott, if you are angry at Monica about something, use your words, not your feet."*

What do you say when a child hurts or bites another?

> *"Trish, it's okay to be angry with people, but I'm not going to let you hit or bite Paul. I'm not going to let him hurt you, either. You can tell him how you feel. Say, 'I'm angry with you, Paul. I don't like what you did.'"*

What do you say when a child expresses a fear of monsters?

> *"There are no monsters here at the center or at home, only on television, in books, and in make-believe. They are not real so they can't hurt you. It's okay to be scared, but we won't let anything bad happen to you."*

What do you say when a child makes fun of another child's work?

> *"Jerry, we let children paint all kinds of pictures and hang their pictures wherever they choose. When you finish yours, you can show me where you want it to be. Your picture is special because you made it, and Pamela's is special too, because she made it."*

What do you say when a child is sad because his or her mother or father went to work and left him or her?

> *"Mommy has to go to work. It's hard when she leaves you. She goes to work to get money to buy clothes and food for you because she loves you and wants to take good care of you. After you wake up and have a snack, she'll be here to take you home."*

What do you say when a child's parent is away traveling for work?

> *"Daddy did not go away because of anything you did wrong or because of anything you thought or said. Daddy's job needs him to be somewhere else for a while. He will not forget you while he is gone. He'll love you no matter where he is. He will come back as soon as he can."*

What do you say when a child wants your attention and you are busy?

> *"Greg, I know you want me to watch you on the monkey bars, but right now I'm over in the tree house. If you wait five minutes I can come there, or you can come join us in the tree house."*

What do you say when a child has a new sibling in the house and expresses jealousy?

> *"Sometimes it's hard to have to share Mommy and Daddy with a new baby. Maybe you think they love the baby more than you because they have to do all those things for the baby, like changing diapers. When you were a baby Mommy and Daddy did these same things for you. They still love you, too, as four-year-old Justin. You don't have to be like a baby for Mommy and Daddy to love you. I bet you feel good about being able to do so many things because you are four."*

What do you say when a mother and father separate and one parent leaves the home?

> *"Daddy/Mommy did not leave home because of anything that you did wrong or because of anything you thought. Sometimes grown-ups have problems, too, and decide they can't live in the same house together. But you did not make it happen. Mommy and Daddy both love you, and they will both still take good care of you."*

Using Caring Words

When a child doesn't want to go home:

When a child is upset or angry:

When a child has trouble doing a task:

When a child who can use the toilet wets his or her pants:

When (add your own here):

Share your words with your trainer. You might also display your Caring Words in your room to help you get used to using them.

See and Hear Your Interactions

If you were able to tape record or videotape yourself talking with children, listen to or view the recording to determine what you did well and what you would like to improve. You might want to review the tape with your trainer and discuss the children's verbal and nonverbal reactions to your communication.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or a new one, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for fostering children's sense of self and self-esteem.

Before you go on to the next module, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem, and add to the chart specific examples of what you have learned about fostering self-esteem while you were working on this module. Read the sample responses on the completed chart at the end of this module.
- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are areas you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed them, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview
(pp. 55-57)

Developing a Positive and Supportive Relationship with Each Child

1 **How did Ms. Kim work on building a positive and supportive relationship with Shawn?**
  a. *She took time to talk with him on her way to the block corner.*

  b. *She stated that she liked the color blue without making judgments about his work.*

2. **How did Ms. Kim work on building Shawn's self-esteem?**
  a. *She gave him one-to-one attention while they hung his picture.*

  b. *She let him know that she remembered he had used blue paint last week, too.*

Helping Children Accept and Appreciate Themselves and Others

1. **What feelings did Jerry appears to have about his block tower?**
  a. *Pride*

  b. *Anger*

2. **How did Mr. Lopez help Jerry learn to express his feelings in an appropriate way?**
  a. *He expressed understanding at Jerry's anger.*

  b. *He held Jerry's arm while reminding Jerry to use words to express anger.*

Providing Opportunities for Children to Be Successful and Feel Competent

1. **Why did Ms. Williams encourage Mark to come back to complete the puzzle?**
  a. *She didn't want him to feel badly about not being able to finish the puzzle.*

  b. *She wanted him to feel good about working hard to complete a task.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams support Mark's positive feelings about himself?**
  a. *She helped him finish the puzzle.*

  b. *She said that after a few more times he could do it on his own.*

  c. *She stayed with him until the puzzle was finished.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem

(p.67)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Foster Self-Esteem
They are eager to please adults and may seek approval and attention.	*Join in children's play and work with them during clean-up. Offer specific, targeted encouragement for "real" efforts and accomplishments. Acknowledge children's requests for your approval and attention, even if you must ask them to wait for a few minutes until you are available. Help children learn to value their own skills and abilities.*
They may be fearful of such things as, loud noises, monsters, the dark, animals, or some people.	*Acknowledge fears and recognize that children feel them deeply. Reassure children by telling them you will keep them safe and won't let them be hurt. Encourage children to express their fears through talking, drawings, stories, pretend play, or other means. Let children know it's okay to be afraid.*
They can feed, dress, and do many things for themselves.	*Let children do as much as possible for themselves. Model ways to do things—such as zipping a coat—and allow plenty of time for a child to complete the task. Offer help only when asked, or when your assistance would calm an anxious child and lead to success.*
They usually have mastered independent use of the toilet and can ask to use the bathroom (if it isn't in the room).	*Set up a system so children can use the bathroom with little supervision, according to their own bodily needs. Make and post pictures to remind children to wash their hands. When needed, offer positive verbal reminders: "Wash your hands after using the toilet."*
They like to help during chores and routines.	*Work with your colleagues to develop plans for carrying out routines that allow children to participate according to their abilities. Invite children to help you with tasks such as moving furniture, wiping tables, or getting books ready to return to the library.*
They like to play make-believe and act out roles.	*Provide and rotate as needed a wide variety of props that respond to children's cultures, families, and interests. Extend and expand children's play by offering new props and by assuming a role and joining in the play. Follow a schedule with long blocks of time when children can choose what they want to do and with whom.*
They can take turns and share, but they don't always want to.	*Make positive comments when you see children sharing with each other. "Tosin heard you ask for more red paint, so he gave you some of his." Provide duplicates of popular materials so children don't have to wait to participate. Help children learn to negotiate with each other so they can share and take turns without getting into disagreements.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem

(p. 68)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Foster Self-Esteem
They can express feelings verbally using large vocabularies but may also stutter or use "baby talk."	*Allow children as much time as they need to express their ideas and feelings. Avoid stepping in to "speak" for them.*
They have strong emotions.	*Talk with children about their feelings. Help them understand the difference between feelings and actions. Reassure them that it is all right to have any and all of their feelings.*
They may express feelings such as anger and jealousy by hitting or kicking.	*Encourage children to use words rather than physical behaviors to tell each other what they want. If needed, help children express the words that identify their feelings. Provide outlets such as clay and playdough, water play, tearing paper, or moving to music that help children manage strong feelings.*
They have a great deal of physical energy.	*Provide indoor and outdoor opportunities for children to use their bodies. Recognize when children need to expend some energy and steer them to appropriate activities such as riding tricycles or dancing with streamers. Follow a schedule that limits the times children have to wait or sit still.*
They like to try new things and to take risks.	*Create an environment that allows children to take risks safely. For example, put mats under the climber so children won't be hurt if they fall. Offer new materials and activities regularly in response to growing skills and changing interests, and to expose children to new information and concepts.*
They are learning about what makes them the same or different from others. They know their names and ages, and learn to identify with their own gender, family, culture, community, and ethnic group.	*Provide books, props, pictures, and other materials that reflect children's cultures, ethnic groups, and communities in positive ways. Read books that show both genders, as well as people with a range of abilities engaged in a variety of activities, jobs, and roles. Talk with children about what makes each person, including themselves, a unique individual.*
They may have difficulty making the transition from home to school.	*Allow children to bring "security" items from home if these help them feel safe. (Children can store the items in their cubbies so they don't hinder participation.) Ask families to share photographs and post them in the room where children can see them. Suggest children "phone" their parents when they seem to be missing them. Reassure children by showing them on a picture schedule when their parents will return: "After we come in from outdoor play we get ready to go home. Next, parents pick up their children."*

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Glossary

Autonomy

Independence; the stage (usually taking place in the toddler years) when children develop the ability to do things for themselves, make decisions, and control their own actions.

Environment

The complete makeup of the indoor and outdoor areas used by children; environment includes the space and how it is arranged and furnished, routines, materials and equipment, activities, and the children and adults who are present.

Initiative

Self-motivation; the stage (usually taking place during the preschool years) when children display high energy and use their skills to explore their world actively and accomplish tasks.

Observation

The act of systematically watching a child's behavior, movement, and body language to learn more about that child. The information gained from observation is used to plan a program that responds to the child's needs, strengths, interests, and other individual characteristics.

Sense of self

Understanding who you are; how you identify yourself in terms of culture, environment, physical attributes, preferences, skills, and experiences. A sense of self evolves throughout life as an individual's perceptions are revised in response to experiences and interactions with others.

Self-esteem

A sense of worth; a good feeling about oneself and one's abilities. Someone who feels connected to others, respected and valued, and able to do things successfully and independently is likely to have self-esteem.

Separation

The lifelong process of growing up and becoming independent from one's parents. Children often have strong feelings about separating from their families, and teachers can help children understand and express these feelings.

Temperament

The nature or disposition of a child; the way a child responds to and interacts with people, materials, and situations in his or her world.

Trust

Security; the stage (usually taking place in infancy) when children develop feelings of comfort and confidence because their needs are met promptly, consistently, and lovingly.

Module 9: Social

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Overview

Promoting children's social development involves:

- Helping children learn to get along with others
- Helping children understand and express their feelings and respect those of others
- Providing an environment and experiences that help children develop social skills

Social development refers to children's increasing ability to get along with others and to enjoy the people in their lives. Social skills are evident when infants respond to the familiar voice or touch of a parent or caregiver, toddlers learn to play alongside others, and preschoolers play cooperatively with their friends. As children develop socially, they learn to share, cooperate, take turns, and negotiate with others. Although they may argue and disagree, most children really enjoy playing with others. They learn to cooperate so that play can continue. Children's social development is strengthened when they have secure relationships with their parents and teachers, when they have many opportunities to play with other children, and when they feel good about themselves.

Social development is essential to children's success.

Social skills are critical to a child's happiness and success in school and in life. Children who are unable to relate positively to others, or who do not know how to make and keep a friend, tend to be lonely and have low self-esteem. The preschool years are a critically important time to help children acquire positive social skills. Children who do not develop these skills in early childhood are likely to have problems when they enter school. They may act out in ways that interfere with their learning: becoming disruptive in the classroom; attacking their peers; failing to do their work; and eventually dropping out of school.

Teaching children pro-social skills helps to prevent violence and aggression.

In recent years, American society has become increasingly characterized by high levels of violence. Most children experience violence on television and in the movies. Even more frightening are the increasing number of children who observe violence first hand in their communities and homes, or experience it as direct victims of aggressive behaviors. Because violence is glorified by the media, children receive mixed messages concerning the appropriateness of violent behaviors. They may take violence for granted, and just as they imitate other adult behaviors, they become aggressive towards each another. Many parents and educators are eager to play an active role in counteracting the trend towards violence. Teachers can assist by creating a safe environment for children and by teaching them positive social behaviors.

Children who play well are more likely to have social skills.

The ability to play is one of the most important ways children develop social skills. Sara Smilansky, an early childhood researcher, has identified four kinds of play young children enjoy—functional play, constructive play, games with rules, and socio-dramatic play.[1] **Functional play** occurs when children explore and examine the properties of objects and materials and find out how things work. When preschoolers take apart an old radio, make designs with colored blocks, or bake bread, they are enjoying functional play. Through **constructive play,** children use materials—for example, blocks, Legos, or sand—to create a representation of something real or imagined. **Games with rules** include card and board games, many computer games, sports, or any type of play governed by a set of rules, that everyone understands and follows. Preschool children can learn simple games with rules—such as Candyland or Lotto—and enjoy group games led by the teacher.

Dramatic play is especially important for social development.

The fourth type of play is **socio-dramatic play.** Children pretend to be real or imaginary characters, try out different roles, and invent stories and situations to role play. For children to participate in socio-dramatic play, they have to be able to generate ideas, share what they know, listen to each other, compromise, and see somebody else's point of view. Through dramatic play, children can learn to control the ways they express their own feelings and emotions. They can role play being mean and nasty because it doesn't really count; it's only pretend. They can also deal with real fears, such as going to the dentist or moving to a new house. The social skills children develop through dramatic play can help them deal with many other situations in everyday life.

Children learn about acceptable behaviors through relationships with adults.

Through their relationships with adults, children learn acceptable social behaviors. As a teacher, you let children know that they are loved and accepted; you meet their needs as consistently and promptly as possible. This gives children a sense of security, which in turn allows them to appreciate, respect, and get along with other children and adults. In addition, you provide an environment where children can spend time alone or play with others. You also help children learn to respect the rights of others, so that everyone can enjoy the benefits of being part of a group. Finally, you help children understand their own feelings and show them acceptable ways to express themselves. (Because children's feelings about themselves affect how they develop socially, you may want to review Module 8, Self, while working on this module.)

Read the following passages. Each set of examples shows how teachers demonstrate their competence in promoting children's social development. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

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[1] Based on Sara Smilansky and Leah Shefatya, *Facilitating Play: A Medium for Promoting Cognitive, Socio-Emotional, and Academic Development in Young Children* (Gaithersburg, MD: Psychosocial and Educational Publications, 1990).

Helping Children Learn to Get Along with Others

Encourage children to help each other.	"Peter, if you ask him, I think Todd might help you carry the sawhorse outside."
Include large blocks of time in the daily schedule when children can choose to play with special friends.	"Diandria, I know you've been eager to make playdough. Who would you like to have help you?"
Model positive ways to interact with others.	"Ms. Kim, I have an extra pair of gloves you can wear when we go on our walk."
Help children find solutions to their conflicts.	"You both want to play with the helicopter. Let's think of different ways you could share it or take turns."
Assist children who have difficulty being accepted by the group.	"Roxanne, leave some space between your carpet square and André's. That way you can both listen to the story without getting in each other's way."

Ms. Frilles looks around the room to see what the children are doing. She sees Sally and Gina, two good friends, playing in the house corner. They are each waving their arms and look very angry. Ms. Frilles walks over to the girls so she can hear what they are saying. The children are playing restaurant, and both girls want to be the waitress. Ms. Frilles says to them, "I ate in a restaurant last week. There were so many customers they needed two servers." Then she steps back. The girls look at each other, then Sally says, "Let's sit the dolls in the chairs. Then we can both be waitresses." Ms. Frilles said, "That's good thinking, girls. You found a way to have fun together." As Ms. Frilles walks away she sees the two dolls sitting at a table in the "restaurant."

1. **How did Ms. Frilles help the girls find a way to continue their play?**

2. **How did Ms. Frilles help the girls feel good about solving their problem?**

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings and Respect Those of Others

Share some of your own feelings when appropriate.	"I'm excited because my sister and her family are coming to visit us next week."
Accept children's feelings while helping them control their actions.	"I know you felt angry when John grabbed the truck. You can tell him you're angry, but I can't let you hurt him."
Help children understand how their peers are feeling.	"Karen is happy because you let her use the water wheel."
State what you think children are feeling when they are having trouble expressing their emotions.	"I wonder if you are having a bad day because you miss your mom a lot when she goes away on a trip."
Give children words they can use to express how they feel.	"When Michael teases you, it makes you feel unhappy so you cry. Tell Michael that you want him to stop teasing you."
Read and discuss stories that help children deal with their feelings about difficult situations.	"Can you think of a time when you had a 'terrible, horrible, no-good, very bad day'?" *(Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No-Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst)

Ms. Kim walks around the play yard to watch and listen to the children who are engaged in a variety of activities. Maddie and Peter are at the bottom of the ladder to the slide. Maddie begins to climb the ladder, then stops. Peter, who is next in line, tells her to hurry up, puts his hand on her back, and pushes her. Maddie turns around and pushes him back. Ms. Kim quickly walks over near the slide and says, "Maddie, I think you might be feeling a little scared about going down the slide, so you are taking your time climbing up the ladder. Peter, I think you might be feeling impatient because you want to have your turn on the slide. I can't let you push each other. What can we do about this problem?" Peter says, "Maddie, if you let me go first, I won't push you and you can take your time." Maddie steps down off the ladder so Peter can have his turn while she takes a little more time to conquer her fears. As Ms. Kim walks away, she turns back and hears Peter encouraging Maddie to come down the slide, "It's really fun, Maddie. You won't hurt yourself!"

1. **How did Ms. Kim let the children know that she understood and respected their feelings?**

2. **How did Ms. Kim help the children respect each other's feelings?**

Providing an Environment and Experiences That Help Children Develop Social Skills

Encourage children to work together during chores and routines.	"The plants in our garden are very dry. Juan and Patty, can you please water them?"
Establish and maintain rules and guidelines that help children learn social skills.	"Derek, there's only room for four children at the easels. What can you do while you are waiting?"
Extend children's dramatic play by activity participating.	"Dr. Jones, thank you for fixing my broken arm. I'll come back so you can take off the cast."
Encourage cooperation rather than competition.	"Let's help the block builders clean up so we can all go outside together."
Provide a variety of props that children can use for dramatic play.	When you put the old hair dryer in the house corner, Jackie and Kia started a beauty shop."
Provide duplicates of popular toys so children who have difficulty sharing can play together.	"Tasha, there's another tambourine on the shelf that you can use."
Provide materials and activities two or more children can enjoy together.	"Heather, why don't you ask Corinna if she wants to play Lotto with you?"

The children are getting ready to go outside. "Where's your other shoe?" Mr. Lopez asks Becky. "I lost it," she says. "I've looked everywhere." Jerry and Sukie, who are ready to go out, are standing by the door. "We have to find Becky's shoe before we go outside," Mr. Lopez explains. "Jerry and Sukie, will you two help Becky find her shoe? Then we can all get outside faster." They begin searching. "Here it is," they call. "It was under the pillows." Jerry holds up the shoe proudly and hands it to Mr. Lopez, who gives it to Becky so she can put it on. "Thank you both for helping," he says. "This bag of balls is very heavy. Who would like to help carry it?" The three children help Mr. Lopez lift the bag. "We are all ready now," he announces. "I like it when we work together to help each other."

1. **How did Mr. Lopez use a daily routine—getting ready to go outside—as an opportunity to help the children develop social skills?**

2. **What social skills did the children learn as they prepared to go outside?**

Your Own Social Development

Adults use social skills every day. When you yield to another car in traffic, share your lunch with a colleague who forgot hers, or wait for your turn to speak at a staff meeting, you are using social skills.

Sometimes you find yourself in situations where you need to adapt to a new group of people. Perhaps you just joined a reading group or began a new exercise class. In both of these situations you use social skills to get to know the other members and to adjust to the group's accepted ways of doing things.

Some adults find it very difficult to adjust to new situations. This difficulty may be due to characteristics of their temperament or personality. It's possible, though, that during childhood they didn't have many opportunities to get to know new people.

Young children learn how society expects them to behave by watching adults interact with each other as well as with children. When children see the important adults in their lives working cooperatively, sharing feelings and ideas, having friendly conversations, and enjoying each other's company, they learn important lessons. Sometimes teachers are so busy that they forget to say "please" or "thank you," and don't take time to enjoy the company of their colleagues. When teachers model social behaviors for children, everyone benefits. Teachers feel positive about their jobs and the people they work with, and the children can gain a more complete picture of their teachers. They see adults working out problems, sharing happy experiences, and cooperating with each other.

Think about how you and your colleagues model social skills. Give some examples below.

Sharing:

Cooperating:

Taking turns:

Solving problems:

Helping:

Appreciating each other:

Showing concern:

Positive relationships at work make your job more enjoyable and rewarding. The social skills you use and model promote your own mental health as well as children's learning.

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to promote the social development of preschool children. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Helping Children Learn to Get Along with Others

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Encourage children to help each other.	☐	☐	☐
2. Include large blocks of time in the daily schedule when children can choose to play with special friends.	☐	☐	☐
3. Model positive ways to interact with others.	☐	☐	☐
4. Help children find solutions to their conflicts.	☐	☐	☐
5. Assist children who have difficulty being accepted by the group.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings and Respect Those of Others

6. Share some of your own feelings when appropriate.	☐	☐	☐
7. Accept children's feelings while helping them control their actions.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings and Respect Those of Others

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Help children understand how their peers are feeling.	☐	☐	☐
9. State what you think children are feeling when they are having trouble expressing their emotions.	☐	☐	☐
10. Give children words they can use to express how they feel.	☐	☐	☐
11. Read and discuss stories that help children deal with their feelings about difficult situations.	☐	☐	☐

Providing an Environment and Experiences That Help Children Develop Social Skills

12. Encourage children to work together during chores and routines.	☐	☐	☐
13. Establish and maintain rules and guidelines that help children learn social skills.	☐	☐	☐
14. Extend children's dramatic play by actively participating.	☐	☐	☐
15. Encourage cooperation rather than competition.	☐	☐	☐
16. Provide a variety of props that children can use for dramatic play.	☐	☐	☐

Providing an Environment and Experiences That Help Children Develop Social Skills

(Continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
17. Provide duplicates of popular toys so children who have difficulty sharing can play together.	☐	☐	☐
18. Provide materials and activities two or more children can enjoy together.	☐	☐	☐

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical characteristics of preschool children
- Use what you know about children to promote their social development

A child's social development begins at birth. Young infants are entirely dependent on the adults who care for them. Through their interactions with the adults who diaper, feed, comfort, and talk to them, infants learn to trust their parents and caregivers. This trust is the foundation for social development.

Toddlers work hard to define themselves as separate and independent beings with minds of their own. When they run, climb, jump, test limits, and shout, "No! Me do!" they are saying, "This is me!" The experiences of being loved, cooperated with, and cared for help toddlers feel good about themselves and let them know what it means to love and care for another person.

Preschool children learn from playing and talking with their peers.

By the time children enter the preschool years, most of them understand which behaviors are acceptable and which are not. Preschoolers are eager to be liked by their peers. They spend more time playing with their peers and are less dependent on adults. They learn from each other and frequently copy what they see others do. It's important to allow ample time each day for children to choose what they want to do and with whom.

Preschool children use their rapidly developing language skills to engage in real conversations with each other—you are likely to hear all kinds of interesting discussions. If you listen carefully to these conversations, you will learn how children are getting along, what their interests are, whose ideas are listened to, and who needs help learning how to get others to listen. You can use this information to plan ways to meet individual needs.

A teacher can help a child learn how to become included in group play.

The preschool years are also characterized by exclusion. You may notice that some children tend to be the excluders while others tend to be the ones left out. Forcing children to play with each other does not work, nor will it help them learn social skills. You can observe to see how often a child is excluded and coach the child by suggesting ways to become included in group play. You might provide a special prop to share or suggest a role to play.

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Play helps children develop in all areas.

Play is children's work. Because play helps children grow in all areas, it is one of the most important ways in which children develop social skills. Through play, children have fun, try out ideas, make friends, pretend, and learn about the world. They develop physical skills, learn how to think and solve problems, find out what they're good at, and develop a sense of competence and self-esteem. They learn to take turns, share favorite things, understand how a friend feels, and express their feelings in acceptable ways. In addition, play helps children try out adult roles and overcome their fears.

Children begin playing when they are infants. An infant may discover his or her toes and find that playing with them is fun. A parent or older sibling may play with an infant, rolling a ball back and forth. Older infants are keen observers and enjoy pretending and imitating adults.

Toddlers enjoy doing the same things again and again. This repetition is a way they master skills. A toddler may play alone with toys that are different from those that others in the group use. Although other children are nearby, the child may not talk to or move toward them. This is called **solitary play**. As children get older, they begin playing alongside each other, using the same kinds of toys and sometimes talking to each other. This is called **parallel play**. For example, two children sitting in a sand box, using shovels and chatting with one another are involved in parallel play. They are enjoying each other's company but are not yet ready to dig a hole in the sand together.

In the preschool years, children often engage in cooperative play.

Solitary and parallel play don't end once a child reaches the preschool years. During a typical day a child might work at the computer alone, do a puzzle while sitting next to other children, or join a group in make-believe play. However, preschool children tend to spend most of their time playing cooperatively in groups. During **cooperative play**, children organize their own activities, assign roles, make up rules, give out specific tasks, and often work toward a common goal. For example, a group of children may decide to build a town in the block corner. Through discussion and negotiation, they decide who will build the different structures—roads, houses, and stores. They resolve conflicts by compromising. The results, both the completed town and the process of working together, are more rewarding than building alone. Children at this level of play really enjoy working and playing together. Enjoying the company of other people is an important part of their social development.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next page identifies some typical behaviors of children in the preschool years, ages three to five. Included are behaviors relevant to social development. The right column asks you to identify ways teachers can use this information to promote children's social development. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module you will learn new strategies, and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at one time. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of this module. By the time you complete this module, you will find that you have learned many ways to promote social development.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Social Development**
They can help to make and follow a few simple rules.	*Involve children in making the rules for the classroom. Play simple games such as* Lotto *or* Go Fish *to help children learn to follow rules in play situations. Offer positive reminders: "Walk indoors, please" to help children follow rules.*
They are learning to share, cooperate, and take turns.	
They like to imitate adult activities.	
They carry on conversations with other children, in pairs and also in groups.	
They may exclude other children from their play.	
They are moving from parallel to cooperative play.	
They continue to need opportunities for solitary play.	

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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Social Development
They ask many questions.	
They begin to develop friendships and may have a best friend.	
They gain greater awareness of the larger community.	
They engage in make-believe play alone and with others.	
They show pride in their own work, and they seek and value adult approval.	
They have strong emotions and feelings and are learning to use words to name them.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of ways to promote children's social development.

II. Promoting Children's Dramatic Play

In this activity you will learn to:

- Observe how preschool children learn and develop through dramatic play
- Provide props to expand children's play
- Interact with children in ways that help them become fully involved in play

What children do during dramatic play changes as they get older.

What children do during dramatic play differs according to their age and stage of development. Young preschoolers typically spend a lot of time running away from monsters or imitating what they have seen first hand. At this age, children do a lot of collecting and gathering, packing suitcases, filling purses, planning trips. Sometimes the planning is all they have time for.

As they get older, preschoolers continue to be fascinated by super heroes and scary monsters. Their play expands to include creating safe places to hide so the monster can't get them. They like dress-up clothes and other props, and develop a wide variety of roles to play. As they begin to understand the difference between fantasy and reality, you may hear them say, "Let's pretend that . . . ."

The dramatic play of older preschool children is more involved. They develop complex sets of characters and situations and may pretend to be real people or fantasy figures from books or television. For many children, dramatic play becomes a means to practice doing something they fear, such as getting a shot at the doctor's or going on an airplane trip. Children also may use dramatic play to work through anxieties about situations in their lives, such as a new baby at home or a parent about to go on a business trip.

Creating an Environment that Supports Dramatic Play

Dramatic play can take place in almost any setting: on the playground, in the house corner, at the woodworking bench, or on a neighborhood walk. It can occur spontaneously—two children at the water table may begin pouring "coffee" into cups and serving each other—or it can also be planned and organized. For example, after a parent visits the classroom to tell children about his job as a flight attendant, several children might decide to take a plane trip. They talk about who will be the pilot, navigator, passengers, and flight attendants; they decide where they will go and what will happen. They use social skills such as negotiation and cooperation to carry out their plans.

In some interest areas, the materials—sand, water, playdough, and finger paint—invite social interaction. Preschoolers are drawn to these materials and feel relaxed when they use them. As they play, they begin to share and talk to each other. When additional props are offered, children begin to pretend and make up play episodes with each other. A basket filled with rolling pins, cookie cutters, plastic knives, and cups and saucers to use with playdough can lead to dramatic play about cooking, baking, and serving.

Dramatic play also occurs in the block area. Young children need time to explore with blocks before they can create a setting for dramatic play. Props such as wooden and rubber animals, people, and cars encourage children to use blocks to create settings for dramatic play.

The outdoor play area also serves as a site for dramatic play. Children might hold picnics in the sandbox, or turn the climber into a space ship, or pretend to drive cars.

The house corner is the most popular site for dramatic play.

The house corner, where the scene is set and ready to go, is usually the most popular site for dramatic play. This area should feature props that encourage play revolving around the family—cooking, cleaning, caring for babies, going to the grocery store. A child-sized table and chairs can set the stage for a variety of dramatic play scenes—from family scenes to a restaurant or doctor's office.

As children gain experience in dramatic play, teachers can offer a variety of new props to build on their interests. Props might relate to a class experience. For example, you could offer new baking and cooking props after a field trip to a bakery. To build on the children's behind-the-scenes tour of a grocery store, offer a cash register, play money, empty food cans and boxes, and shopping bags. Help children recall what they saw and did so they can use the props to recreate and expand their experiences. Props may also relate to something important that has happened in children's lives—a child going to the hospital, or a neighborhood fire that the children witnessed.

Encouraging Dramatic Play through the Use of Prop Boxes

One way to extend children's dramatic play is to create prop boxes—collections of materials focused on a specific theme, such as a health clinic or a shoe store. To create a prop box, think of a theme that builds on children's interests or a recent experience. Then think of items children could use to engage in dramatic play around the theme. Collect the materials and put them in the prop box—any sturdy container will do for storage—until you are ready to introduce them to the children. On the following page are some suggested themes and materials to include in prop boxes.[2]

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[2] Adapted with permission from Cheryl Foster, "Dramatic Play Kits or Prop Boxes," in *Competency-Based Training Module No. 24: Dramatic Play* (Suppl. No. 5) (Coolidge, AZ: CDA Training Program, Institute of Human Development, Central Arizona College, 1982), pp. 41-46.

Prop Boxes for Preschool Children

Health Clinic

Gauze
Cotton balls
Height-weight chart
Prescription pads
Tongue depressors (disposable)
Real stethoscope
Plastic eye droppers
Dolls
Scale
Red finger paint for blood
Bandages
Play thermometer
Paper and pencils
Stretcher or cot
Cloth for making bandages
Beds
Stop watch
Telephone
Hospital gown
Uniforms

Unisex Hair Stylist

Large mirror
Rollers or curlers
Bobby pins
Manicure set
Paper
Hair dryer and curling iron without cords
Hand mirrors
Hair nets
Hair clips
Nail file
Pencil
Hair care products (empty containers)
Hairpins
Plastic basin
Barrettes and ribbons
Magazines
Shaving brushes
Hairbrushes and combs (wash after use)
Towels
Scarves
Headbands
Play money
Shaving cream
Razors (toys or real ones without blades)

Beach

Sunglasses
Umbrellas
Playing cards
Buckets and shovels
Blankets or beach towels
Sun hats
Picnic basket
Swim goggles
Sand molds
Suntan lotion (empty)
Beach bags
Fishing poles
Inflatable tubes
Frisbees®
Paper plates and cups and plastic utensils
Sea shells
Portable radio
Flippers
Plastic thongs
Food (pictures or empty cans or boxes)

Gas Station and Automobile Repair

Work shirts
Flashlights
Key ring and keys
Parts (used and washed spark plugs, filters, gears)
Caps
Wiring
Rags
Auto supply catalogs
Tire pump
Empty oil cans
Work gloves
Tools (pliers, hammers screwdrivers)
Oil funnel
Windshield wipers
Short lengths of hose
Small tool set

Post Office/Mail Carrier

Index card file
Stamps from "junk" mail
Gummed labels
Mailbox(es) (arch cardboard over a box, paint, cut slot)
Play money
Rubber stamps and ink pad
Writing pads
Crayons
Envelopes of different sizes
Rubber bands
Mailbags (shoulder-strap purses or paper bags with straps attached)
Pencils
Junk mail
Mail carrier hat

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Guiding and Extending Children's Play

As a teacher, you can play an important role in helping children become fully involved in dramatic play. By observing, you can see which children do and do not get along with one another, what roles they play in the group, and what problems or anxieties individual children are experiencing. Observation also lets you know what is going on in the play situation and when your guidance is needed. Your interventions should be gentle and indirect, such as providing a suitable prop to help a child get involved in the play. "Kia, here is some money to give the storekeeper. I think he has run out of change."

Participating in dramatic play is one of the best ways to teach play skills.

One effective way to guide children's play is to take a role and participate in the play. Sit at the table in the house corner for 20 to 30 minutes, while a colleague handles the rest of the room. Chat with the children as they come and go, or pretend to talk on the telephone. From this vantage point you can observe the children, comment on what they are doing, offer information, and give indirect suggestions of what to do next. Here are some examples.

- Sergio is holding the coffee pot. The teacher says: "I'd really like a cup of coffee. Could you please put the coffee on the stove to get hot."

  This involves Sergio in playing "house," tells him that stoves are used to heat food and coffee is served hot, and suggests an action—putting the pot on the stove.

- Mara starts to leave the house corner. The teacher says: "Where's Mara going?"

  This stops Mara from just wandering away and helps her feel included. Mara says, "I'm going to the store."

  Picking up on this, the teacher offers a few ideas: "Mara, have you got your money? Could you please buy me some milk?"

  Mara feels free to leave but also has a good reason for coming back.

- Nigel is standing at the stove. The teacher talks to Ana on the phone: "Yes, we're pretty busy here. Nigel is cooking. Hey, Nigel. Ana wants to know what you're cooking."

  Nigel may not have had a purpose for his actions at the stove. The teacher's description helps Nigel focus on what he is doing. Nigel thinks before answering, "I'm cooking beans."

- Gemma is holding a doll. The teacher says: "Oh, is your baby sick? Did you call the doctor? Here, let's get her on the phone."

The teacher's questions help Gemma focus on a prop, the doll, as she assumes the role of parent in the play episode.

- Delia and Shanelle are playing with dolls. The teacher says: "Take the baby off the table. He might fall and hurt himself." "Is the baby ready for bed? Be sure to put the blanket on so she won't catch cold."

  The teacher helps Delia and Shanelle learn how real babies are cared for.

Here are some other ways in which teachers can help children play.

Refer to children in their role names.	"Doctor, could you move your patient over here? Your examining table is in the way of the construction crew."
Remind children of something they did in the past.	"Do you remember last week when we went on a trip to the park? We had a lot of fun."
Model playful behaviors yourself.	"I could smell your bread baking from way over by the easels."
Help children get started, then step back so they can express their own ideas.	"I really enjoyed my dinner, but I have to run to get my bus."
Remind children of classroom rules within the context of the play.	"I think this grocery store can only hold four customers. Susan, can you and Tony take a walk around the block until these customers are finished with their shopping?"
Reinforce positive social behaviors when you observe them.	"I liked the way the two campers took turns wearing the backpack."

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will [illegible] children's [illegible]. Conduct a 30-minute observation of a group of children [illegible]. Next, use your observation notes to describe [illegible]. Record examples of the social skills children were developing or using during their play. Then develop a plan for extending the children's play. The plan might include a way to involve a child who was [illegible] you can use to comment on the play. Finally, implement your plan and record what happened.

Begin by reading the example that follows. It is a shortened version of a complete [illegible] observation. Then complete your own observations using the blank form provided.

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Promoting Children's Play
(Example)

Setting: *House Corner* **Children:** *Tanya, George, Danny, and Carrie*

Prop Box Theme: *Camping out*

Props:

two sheets (to make a tent), two flashlights, backpack, thermos, cooler, plastic plates and utensils, three sleeping bags, tablecloth, rope, mosquito netting, nature books, binoculars, empty food containers, compass

What happened:

Tanya and George were in the house corner opening the camping prop box when Danny joined them. George said he would be the daddy and Tanya could be the mommy and Tanya agreed. Danny said he wanted to be the daddy. George said Danny could be the daddy's best friend and use a flashlight. Danny agreed and helped George make a tent with the sheets. George put on the backpack. Danny picked up the thermos and some food. Tanya got a bag and filled it with the plates, utensils, and tablecloth. Carrie joined them and Tanya said she could be the other mother. George said there could only be one. Danny said she could be his wife. That was okay with George. Danny gave Carrie the thermos to carry. George lined everyone up and they walked around the room and back to the tent. Then George said they should go to sleep. He and Danny put the three sleeping bags in the tent. They all wanted to lie down right away. Tanya said she didn't want to sleep. She and Carrie spread out the table cloth to have a picnic.

Social skills used or being developed:

The children negotiated with each other as they worked out who would play each role and shared props.

Danny shared the thermos with Carrie so she would have something to carry.

Danny acted as a negotiator, suggesting a role for Carrie.

The girls found a way to play so they could do more than what George told them to do.

Ways to extend the play:

The children didn't use the nature books. I could say to them, "I saw a lot of interesting plants out in the woods. I wonder if there are pictures of those plants in these books?"

I could add some more props so the children could have a pretend fire to cook their food on. I will add some logs and some pots and pans.

I can read Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe *by Vera Williams or* Sleep Out *by Carol Currick.*

What happened?

They used all the cooking props I added and continued to take turns in the tent.

I read the stories. The next day I saw Tanya and Danny go canoeing in the wagon.

Promoting Children's Play

Setting: ____________________ **Children:** ____________________________________

Prop Box Theme: ____

Props:

What happened:

Social skills used or being developed:

Ways to extend the play:

What happened?

Discuss this activity with your trainer. Continue observing children to find out what they are doing during dramatic play and what materials you might add to the environment to expand their play.

III. Creating an Environment That Supports Children's Social Development

In this activity you will learn to:

- Set up the environment so that children are comfortable being in a group all day
- Plan the environment so that children can develop and use social skills

Many of the children who come to your program will have to adjust to group living. No matter how homelike the environment, the classroom is not a home. You can respond to children's questions and concerns by how you organize the environment.

Do I belong here? "Here is a special place where you can keep your things. It's called a cubby. We'll hang this photograph of you and your family and write your name above it so everyone will know it's yours."

Will the things I make and the things I bring here be safe? "I'll help you hang up your paintings until they're dry. Then you can store them in your cubby until you take them home, or I'll help you hang them on the class room wall."

Do I have to share the things I want to play with? "We know it's hard to share, so we make sure we have several of the most popular toys. After you've been here for awhile, you'll find it easier to share."

How will I know when it's my turn? "When Joe is finished using the wagon he'll ring the bell. Then you'll know it's your turn. He'll wait with the wagon until you get there."

How will I know what to do? "We'll help you get used to being at the center. Every day we do the same things, in the same order, just as you see in these pictures. Soon you'll be able to tell me what we do next."

Will I have friends? "First, I'll help you find out what things you like to do here. Then, I'll help you get to know other children who like to do the same things."

To create supportive environments, teachers make sure children have many opportunities to cooperate, share, and help. In addition, teachers minimize or eliminate the conditions that lead to disagreements and aggressive behaviors. One of the most effective ways to help children feel comfortable in a group setting is to create supportive physical and programmatic environments. The physical environment includes the arrangement of furniture and equipment in the indoor and outdoor spaces used by children, interest areas, and the way materials are displayed. The program environment refers to the daily schedule, routines, transitions, and adult-led and child-choice activities.

Planning the Physical Environment

Like adults, children respond to the characteristics of the physical environment. An attractive room with homelike features—walls painted in warm colors, curtains hanging in the windows, soft lighting, and pictures hung at children's eye-level with plenty of space between them—provides an uncluttered, calm setting for children's play. Several interior decorating rules—"less is more," "provide a place for everything," "form follows function," and "rearrange to meet current needs"—are guidelines that apply to any environment for preschool children.

Less is more. Offer a variety of materials to stimulate children's interests, but not so many that children are overwhelmed by too many choices.

Provide a place for everything. Display toys on low, labeled shelves, store play materials with loose pieces (such as Legos®) in separate open containers, and put materials together that are used together (paper and crayons). A well-organized environment allows children to find what they need. Clean-up time goes more smoothly because it's easy to see where things go.

Form follows function. Set up interest areas near necessary resources. For example, have the art area near the sink and the computer area near an electrical outlet. Children won't drip paint on the way to the sink or trip over extension cords.

Rearrange to meet current needs. Create a flexible room layout so teachers can move furniture and equipment when children need space to spread out or to store unfinished projects.

Limit the number of children who can use an area at one time.

Accidents are common in preschool rooms. Children get in each other's way, knock down buildings, and bump into each other. Some children interpret these accidents as intentional and may respond with aggression. Limiting the number of children allowed to use an interest area or piece of outdoor equipment can minimize crowding and prevent accidents, thus reducing a source of disagreements. Children can monitor the area themselves if you set up a concrete system that lets them know if there's room for them to play, e.g., five hooks to hang name tags limits the area to five children.

Provide more than one way to enter or exit an area.

Some disagreements take place when children can't get in or out of an area easily. They may feel trapped or frustrated because movement is limited. To avoid this problem, make sure there is more than one way to get in or out of each area. "Gwen, use the steps to climb up to the loft. The rope ladder is for climbing down."

Locate related interest areas near each other in order to extend children's play.

The location of interest areas can support or work against social development. To extend children's imaginative play in the house corner, you might create another complementary area nearby using prop boxes or other materials. A store, restaurant, or doctor's office can provide new play opportunities. Children in the house corner will have somewhere to go and the children in the new area will have "customers" or "patients." The new areas can stay in place as long as they are capturing children's interests.

Locating the block area away from the line of traffic offers protection and allows children to work on their structures without worrying about accidents. On the other hand, if the block area is in an unprotected space, children passing by are likely to get in the way of the builders and may accidentally knock down their creations.

Provide places where children can take "time out."

Although preschoolers spend most of their time playing in groups, even the most outgoing children sometimes want to be alone for a while. They may take time out from group living because they are tired and need to "recharge their batteries." Some children need to spend time alone because they are overwhelmed by strong feelings. Time away from the group allows them to handle their feelings and prevents them from losing control and acting out in inappropriate ways. Examples of time-out places include:

- a listening area with tape recorders or CD players with earphones;
- small enclosed spaces—a platform or lookout loft, a large cardboard box, a small defined area with pillows;
- a small bean bag chair; or
- a small table and chair for one child.

Provide places where a few friends can play together.

When children want to play with just one or two others, they need spaces sized to accommodate a few friends. Indoors, you can use shelves as dividers to create small spaces, group a pile of pillows in a corner, or turn a large appliance carton into a cozy nook. Outdoors, a tire swing can hold two children. Large hollow blocks and planks are ideal for children who wish to build their own spaces. A tractor-tire sandbox is the perfect size for a small group.

Provide lookouts so children can observe play.

To help children who find it difficult to enter a group, you can create lookouts—places from which a child can observe others at play until he or she feels ready to join in. A loft can be a lookout or a quiet area can serve as a lookout for a noisier one. For example, as Hussein paints a picture in the art area, he watches several children playing house next door in the dramatic play area. The art area serves as a lookout point for Hussein. He can watch the noisier, more social play in the dramatic play area and learn what the children are doing—cooking dinner. This information gives him the confidence to join in the play. "I'm hungry. What's for dinner?"

Planning the Programmatic Environment

Your daily schedule, routines, transitions, activities, and group time can also support social development. These aspects of the environment are less concrete than interest areas, materials, and equipment. However, your careful planning of these parts of the program can help children learn social skills such as helping others, cooperating, and enjoying the company of others.

Try these strategies in your classroom.

Follow a daily schedule that has long blocks of time when children can make choices––what to do, what to use, who to play with, when to move on to something new. Include opportunities for children to play alone, with one or two others, in a small group, and in a large group.

Use routines and other opportunities to encourage children's independence. Children can use their self-help skills during personal routines such as washing hands or brushing teeth. When you set up a system for rotating assigned chores, children can share the responsibility for keeping the classroom running smoothly. In addition, ask for children's help at other times—to find a classmate's lost mitten, to carry something heavy outdoors, or to teach another child a skill.

Announce transitions before they occur to give children time to finish what they are doing. Some children find it difficult to move from one activity to the next. They may need several reminders that the transition is coming, one-on-one attention from a teacher, or extra time to finish what they're doing.

Plan activities that respond to the interests of a child who seldom joins in group play. This lets the child know he or she has been noticed, gives the child an opportunity to interact with others, and lets the other children see the child in a new light. You can also plan activities that encourage cooperation—painting a mural, making a collage, planting a garden, building an obstacle course.

Use group time to play cooperative games and teach social skills. Try using puppets to act out a conflict resolution strategy, reading a story in which the characters face and resolve a social problem, or involving children in setting rules for a new area or piece of equipment.

The programmatic environment should offer a balance between structure and choice time.

An effective programmatic environment is balanced—neither highly structured by adults nor completely devoted to children's free play. Ideally, there is enough structure for children to feel secure, but not so much that children can't make choices and interact with each other. In a balanced environment, children spend most of the day in activities of their own choosing and teachers observe and guide their play. Teachers stay alert to opportunities to reinforce social skills and address aggression. They remind children of rules and guidelines, model social behaviors, offer new props, provide indirect suggestions to extend play themes, and let children know they value their social skills. "Jade, that was a good idea to offer to be a passenger instead of the bus driver. Toya, maybe on the next trip you can be the passenger and Jade can be the driver."

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will select one aspect of your center's physical environment and one aspect of its programmatic environment to assess and improve, if necessary. Describe what you do now, how it does or does not support social development, and how you would like to change your practices. Next, implement one of the changes and report on what happens as a result. Begin by reviewing the example that follows.

Using the Environment to Support Social Development

(Example)

Select one aspect of the physical environment, then complete the chart.

- offering enough materials to stimulate interest without overwhelming children
- providing a place for everything
- setting up interest areas near necessary resources
- limiting the number of children who can use an area at one time
- providing more than one way to enter or exit an area
- locating related interest areas near each other to extend children's play
- providing places where children can take time out or play with one friend
- providing lookouts so children can observe play

What We Do Now	How This Affects Social Development	How We Could Change Our Practices
Some interest areas have two ways in or out, others do not. *The play house we made from a refrigerator carton has a front door, but no back door.*	*Children bump into each other which causes disagreements that sometimes get out of control.* *Sometimes children refuse entry to others who want to use the play house, saying "You can't come in."*	*We can rearrange the interest areas to create two entry points.* *We can cut out a back door in the play house.*

What change will you make in the physical environment?

We can make a back door in the play house.

What happened as a result?

The conflicts in the play house have almost disappeared. Children using the house are getting more involved in imaginative play.

Using the Environment to Support Social Development

Select one aspect of the physical environment, then complete the chart.

- offering enough materials to stimulate interest without overwhelming children
- providing a place for everything
- setting up interest areas near necessary resources
- limiting the number of children who can use an area at one time
- providing more than one way to enter or exit an area
- locating related interest areas near each other to extend children's play
- providing places where children can take time out or play with one friend
- providing lookouts so children can observe play

What We Do Now	**How This Affects Social Development**	**How We Could Change Our Practices**

What change will you make in the physical environment?

What happened as a result?

Select one aspect of the programmatic environment, then complete the chart.

- following a daily schedule with long blocks of choice time
- offering meaningful opportunities to participate in routines
- announcing transitions before they occur
- planning activities in response to individual interests
- playing cooperative games and teaching social skills at group time

What We Do Now	**How This Affects Social Development**	**How We Could Change Our Practices**

What change will you make in the programmatic environment?

What happened as a result?

Discuss this activity with your colleagues. Implement other changes in the environment, as needed, to encourage children's social development.

IV. Helping Children Learn Caring Behaviors

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize caring behaviors in children
- Help children develop caring behaviors

Caring or prosocial behaviors are valued by society. They include social skills such as sharing and taking turns, as well as the following behaviors:[3]

Showing empathy:

- Feeling and acting concerned when someone is upset or hurt
- Sharing another person's happiness or excitement

Showing generosity:

- Giving a toy or possession to another person
- Sharing a snack or toy with another person

Helping:

- Assisting another person do a job
- Stepping in when someone needs assistance

Children develop caring behaviors over a long period of time. Some infants demonstrate caring behaviors very early in life. They get upset and cry when they hear another infant crying. Between the ages of one and two, children begin to show real concern for others. When this concern is recognized and reinforced by parents and caregivers, children continue to develop caring behaviors. Between the ages of two and six, children begin to develop skills in responding appropriately to the needs and feelings of others.

As they learn to get along with others, young children are learning caring behaviors. The most direct way in which children learn such behaviors is by watching the adults who care for them. During a typical day you might help a child find a lost mitten, applaud a child who finishes a difficult puzzle, and listen to a child's concerns. In so doing, you are modeling caring behaviors for children. Your dependable and responsive interactions help children feel secure. This security allows children to show concern for others and to be cooperative members of the group.

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[3] Based on Janice J. Beaty, *Observing Development of the Young Child* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1986), p. 111.

You can think of caring behaviors as examples of the Golden Rule. When people behave toward others as they would like others to behave toward them, they are using caring behaviors. Teachers demonstrate these behaviors in their relationships with children, parents, and colleagues. They also help children learn these behaviors by letting children know that caring behaviors are valued by society.

Try these strategies for encouraging caring behaviors in children.[4]

Plan group activities that involve thoughtfulness and emphasize a sense of community. For example, make get-well cards for a child who is sick to let him know he is missed and that the class hopes he feels better.

Use each child's name often. Refer to children by their given names when you talk to them. Practice saying each name as it is pronounced by the family. Hang pictures of children and families on the wall at children's eye level and talk about who is who. Label the children's art work and cubbies. Use techniques such as singing songs with children's names in them to encourage children to call each other by name.

Give small groups of children cooperative play ideas. Suggest activities that call for cooperation. Cooperative activities may include moving a large box, folding a large blanket, or creating a collage.

Read books with themes of helpfulness and friendship. "What are some ways to be a good friend?" (after reading *Best Friends for Francis* by Russell Hoban).

Talk about exciting things that have happened to the children and teachers. When a child has had a happy experience, share that pleasure by giving out hugs or handshakes. "Tim, you baked such a beautiful loaf of bread. Can I shake your hand?"

Help children learn how to talk about their feelings. "When you are worried about something, you can talk to me about it. Everyone has worries. I will listen carefully, and I won't make fun of you."

Take pictures of children to record special occasions and typical daily events. Ask a parent to help by putting the pictures in small albums that children can easily handle. Children will enjoy reliving events and talking about what they did together. Families will enjoy seeing what their children do in your program.

Acknowledge what children say even when they can't have or do what they want. "I heard you ask for more French toast. There isn't any more left. If you are hungry, you can have a banana or a bowl of cereal."

[4] Adapted from a workshop handout, *Teaching Techniques to Encourage Friendly (Prosocial) Behavior in Young Children* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University).

Caring behaviors are not learned quickly; teachers need to be patient as children slowly learn the skills of negotiation, sharing, and cooperation. It is very natural for young children to put their own needs first. When their needs are met, children gradually learn to think about the needs of others. Frequently, you may have to reassure children with little experience in group living that their own wants will be satisfied.

Applying Your Knowledge

This learning activity has three parts. 1) Over the next three days, observe the activities in the room for five-minute periods, several times each day. Then review your notes and list examples of children learning caring behaviors. 2) Reflect on your own behaviors and interactions. Note some examples of ways you demonstrate and promote children's caring behaviors. 3) Make a book about the children's caring behaviors and read it with a small group. Read the examples that follow. Then use the blank forms that follow to record your examples.

1. *Observation Summary: Caring Behaviors*

(Example)

Caring Behaviors[5]	**Examples**
Showing concern for someone in distress	*Bonita fell down in the play yard. Susan put her arm around her and helped her get up. Then Susan got a teacher to help.*
Showing delight when someone experiences pleasure	*Tamila was very excited when Ms. Frilles hung up her picture. Charisse came over to look at it.*
Sharing something with another	*David gave Shawn part of his muffin at lunch time.*
Giving a possession to another	*Dean found a shiny rock outside and gave it to Maddie.*
Taking turns with toys or activities	*Billy and Lamont took turns putting blocks on their tower until it fell over.*
Helping another to do a task	*Maddie helped Felipe wipe up a spill.*
Helping another in need	*Carlos saw David trying to get a wagon out of the shed and went over to help him.*

2. *How You Demonstrate and Promote Caring Behaviors*

(Example)

When Trina's mom came to pick her up, I asked her how her day was. Then I gave her a flyer about our center's new toy lending library and invited her to the opening celebration.

Dean saw Kalisha having a hard time reaching the crackers. He moved them closer to Kalisha so she could serve herself. Later on I said to Dean, "I think Kalisha really appreciated your help.

Moki's mother dropped off the parent newsletters this morning. I asked the children to help me fold them in half and put one in each mailbox.

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[5] Based on Janice J. Beaty, *Observing Development of the Young Child* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1986), p. 30.

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4. A Book About Caring Behaviors

(Example)

Write a book about children using caring behaviors. Illustrate the book with photographs, pictures from magazines, or drawings. Some children may want to help write and illustrate the book.

Describe your book and how you made it.

We wrote a book about Lamont and Billy's block tower. The boys rebuilt their tower while I took photos. We pasted each photo on a piece of cardboard and punched holes in each page. Then we put the pages in order. I asked the children to tell me what to write under each one. Max drew a picture for the cover. We used clear Contact paper to protect the pages and the cover. We laced the cover and pages together.

Read the book to the children and describe their responses.

Billy and Lamont liked hearing their names. At the end of the story several children said, "Read it again." Then I put the book in the library corner. During the next week the children "read" the book out loud to themselves and each other.

1. Observation Summary: Caring Behaviors

Caring Behaviors[6]	**Examples**
Showing concern for someone in distress	
Showing delight when someone experiences pleasure	
Sharing something with another	
Giving a possession to another	
Taking turns with toys or activities	
Helping another to do a task	
Helping another in need	

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[6] Adapted from Janice J. Beaty, *Observing Development of the Young Child* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1986), p. 30.

2. How You Demonstrate and Promote Caring Behaviors

3. A Book About Caring Behaviors

Write a book about children using caring behaviors. Illustrate the book with photographs, pictures from magazines, or drawings. Some children may want to help write and illustrate the book.

Describe your book and how you made it.

Read the book to the children and describe their responses.

Discuss this activity with your trainer and with a colleague who also cares for these children.

V. Helping Children Relate Positively to Others

In this activity you will learn to:

- Tell when a child needs your help to make friends
- Help individual children develop friendship-making skills

Every young child needs to have at least one friend to talk to, play with, disagree with, make up with, and care for. Some children seem to know instinctively how to make friends and find their place in their group. Other children may take longer, but once they feel comfortable, they are able to join a group and make friends.

Children who feel rejected by others and don't know how to make friends need adult assistance. Such children often have low self-esteem, feel unloved, and lack the social skills they need to develop friendships. Because they aren't accepted by their peers, they have fewer chances to develop social skills. They cannot break the cycle of rejection. These children need to learn how to make friends so they can avoid serious problems in school and in later life.

Children who have trouble making friends may be shy or withdrawn, overly aggressive, or rejected by their peers for other reasons. You can make a big difference in a child's life by helping him or her break the cycle of rejection and learn how to relate positively to others.

Helping Children Who Are Very Shy Make Friends

Almost every group of children includes one or two who are very shy. Teachers may feel empathy for these children, but before offering assistance they need to observe to see if such a child is just moving at a slower pace than others. A shy child may need to play alone successfully first, or to sit back and observe other children at play to learn how to become part of the group. The child may begin by playing with one or two children. Then, after becoming more skilled, he or she will probably move on to playing with a group of children.

There are some children, however, who are so shy or withdrawn they need you to step in. It's best to be subtle. Saying "Be nice to Billy" or "Can you let Mary play too?" are not helpful. Remarks such as these tend to make the shy child feel self-conscious or embarrassed. The other children may go along with your suggestions for a time, but the shy child will not develop the social skills to cope when you aren't there to intervene directly.

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Try the following suggestions for helping shy children develop social skills and make friends.[7]

Observe, observe, observe.	Watch what the child does and says, who the child talks to, and who the child watches. When the child is playing alone with Legos®, is he or she building with concentrated attention or also watching the firefighters in the house corner? Observe to find out what the child likes to do, where his or her favorite places are, whether the child behaves differently outdoors, and what skills the child has.
Establish a connection with the child.	Use your observations to help you talk with the child. "I see you are watching John and Pam playing at the water table." If the child responds positively, you can ask a question to extend the conversation. "Do you think John's cup will hold more water than Pam's? Perhaps you can play at the water table tomorrow and figure out the answer." You might also comment on what the child is doing. "I see you are lining up the shells by size." Such comments help the child feel more secure because he or she knows that the teacher is paying attention.
Notice when a child is particularly engaged in an activity and try to build on this interest.	"Jason, you seemed to really enjoy that story. What do you like to do on snowy days?"
Use what you know about the child's interests to create special situations.	For example, if you know that Holly really likes to cook, plan a cooking activity that involves several children working together. Include Holly when you conduct the activity and ask several open-ended questions to get her involved.
Help children find good friends.	Just as there might be several shy children in your room, there also might be several children who are socially competent and sensitive. Try asking one of these children and the shy child to help you do a task. "Drew, could you please help Tommy and me carry the toys outside?" Or let both children know about an activity that you think both would be interested in. "Drew and Tommy, I know you both like the woodworking bench. Ms. Johnson is getting the tools out now. I think there's room for two more carpenters."
Help the shy child understand his or her feelings of shyness.	"It's okay to want to play alone when you don't know the other children too well. After a while you'll feel more comfortable and be ready to play with Carlos, Portia, and the others."

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[7] Adapted from Dennie Palmer Wolf, ed., *Connecting: Friendship in the Lives of Young Children and Their Teachers* (Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, Inc., 1986), pp. 58-62.

Helping Overly Aggressive Children Make Friends

In any group of preschool children there may be one or two who are not able to control their behaviors. They use aggression as a means to express their unhappiness or to get their own way. These children do not know how to take turns, negotiate, or cooperate with others. Because they are overly aggressive, other children do not want to include them in their play.

Although teachers also may have trouble relating to overly aggressive children, they must learn to overcome their negative feelings. It may help to remember that children who hit or bully other children are emotionally troubled or in pain. They feel unhappy or insecure, and they need help to learn positive ways of relating to other children. These children must feel safe and cared for before they can develop the social skills needed to make friends and play with other children.

Try these suggestions for helping aggressive children make friends.

Help the child understand the consequences of his or her actions.	"I think you want to play with Crystal and Susan. But when you knock their tower down it makes them angry. It doesn't make them want to play with you."
Try to redirect a child's angry energy.	"Shawn, I know you are very angry, but you may not hit Bonita. Use your hands to throw this ball at the wall. When you are ready, we can talk about what happened."
Identify a challenging physical activity the child really enjoys and set it up so several children can participate.	"Denise, you are a great jumper. Use this chalk to mark how far you and Lloyd can jump. You can take turns jumping."
Spend time alone with the child after he or she is no longer exhibiting aggressive behavior.	"David, let's sit in the big chair and read a story together. Ms. Johnson brought in some new books I think you might like."
Sit with the child and watch a group at play. Interpret the children's actions so the child can begin to understand how others use social skills.	"Carlos just came to the sandbox where Tamila and Renee are baking cakes. I think he wants to play with them. Carlos is making a cake to share. He's pretending to be a neighbor."
Help the child develop ways to achieve his or her goals without using aggression.	"I know you want to be the doctor, but Emily is being the doctor now. Let's find out if this is a hospital where there are lots of doctors."
Use the child's positive characteristics to help him or her be accepted by the group.	"Chaundra collected some beautiful leaves on our walk. Let's put them on the table where everyone can see them."

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Helping Children Who Are Rejected for Other Reasons to Make Friends

There are children in every group who are neither aggressive nor shy yet still are excluded from play. These children, who may be loud, clumsy, or bossy, do not know how to get involved with their peers. They may play in the block area for a while, get up and move to the easel, try to join in with the house corner family, and then go back to the blocks. They appear to be unaware of the effects of their behavior. They seem to want to play with others, but because they are not able to understand what the other children are playing, they don't know how to get involved. You may hear a lot of complaints about these children. "She's always butting in." "He talks too loud." "He knocked our buildings over."

Often these children have some social skills but may not know how to use them. After observing carefully, think of ways to include such a child in a project with another child. Try these other suggestions to help children who are often rejected develop social skills and make friends:[8]

Teach the child how to ask questions to find out what other children are playing.	"What are you doing?" "Who are you pretending to be?" "What are you building?"
Suggest that the child watch and listen to find out what the other children are playing before trying to play with them.	"Delores, if you sit here and watch Bonita and Tim play, I'll bet you can guess what they're doing. Which one do you think is the firefighter?"
Encourage the child to discuss his or her feelings about being rejected.	"You look sad, Cynthia. Can you tell me what happened?" Describing what happened may help the child understand why she was rejected by the others.
Coach the child on how to follow the group's accepted social practices.	"Felipe, when it's time to go outdoors, try to get your coat on more quickly. Then the other children won't have to wait and we can all go outside and have fun."
Help the child state rules or the accepted behaviors of the group as a way to justify attempts to be included.	"I'd like to play, too. There are only three people in the sandbox and four children can play there."

Applying Your Knowledge

[illegible]

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[8] Adapted from Dwight L. Rogers and Dorene Doerre Ross, "Encouraging Positive Social Interaction Among Young Children," *Young Children* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, March 1986), pp. 15-16.

Helping Individual Children Relate to Others

(Example)

Child: *Alex* **Age:** *4 years, 3 months* **Date:** *January 15-16*

Observation Notes	Summary
Time: *5:35 p.m.* *Alex is with a small group listening to Ms. Williams read a story. He sits at the edge of the group. The door opens. He turns to see who comes in. Kim gets up to greet her mother. Alex follows her when she gets her coat. The other children say goodbye to Kim. Alex walks back to the group. He says, "This is a dumb story."*	*Alex seems to want his dad to come. He is easily distracted. Perhaps he wants to go home. He doesn't notice that the other children want to hear the rest of the story.*
Time: *7:20 a.m.* *Alex comes in with his father. He smiles. His father says, "Say hello, Alex." Alex says hello in a loud voice. The other children turn to look at him. Ms. Williams asks Alex what he wants to do. "Blocks," he says. Kara and Donny are building a big tower. Alex builds beside them. Kara says, "Hey, we need all the blocks." Alex knocks down her building. He gets up and goes to the puzzle table.*	*If Alex knew how to join in with the block building group, he might have enjoyed himself.*
Time: *10:45 a.m.* *Alex is helping to serve snack. He carries a bowl of fruit to the table. He puts the bowl down, then stands behind the table. He is smiling. When all the children have their fruit, Alex takes his. He sits down next to Julia. She says, "I don't like bananas. Do you want mine?" Alex smiles and takes a piece of banana. He says, "I like bananas, but I don't like grapes." Julia says, "Can I have them?" Alex agrees and lets her reach over and take them.*	*Alex seems to like Julia. He lets her have his grapes. He seemed to feel good about helping, too.*

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Plan:

I will tell Alex that I know it's hard to wait for his parents at the end of the day. I will ask him if there is something he would like to do instead of listening to the story. I will explain that the other children do want to hear the story.

When I see Alex watching other children, I'll point out how the children are working and playing together—for example, "Tony just gave Crystal that block because she needed one that size for her part of the road."

I'll encourage Alex and Julia to play together or help me do something. They both like to paint outside. I'll ask them to help carry the double easel outside one day next week.

Results (after two weeks):

Alex stays busy helping me clean up at the end of the day. He doesn't watch the door as often.

Alex joined a small group over at the water play table. He held the funnel while Tony poured.

Alex and Julia painted outside. She is very talkative so she kept the conversation going. Later in the week I saw them riding tricycles together.

Helping Individual Children Relate to Others

Child: ____________ **Age:** ________________ **Date:** ____

Observation Notes	**Summary**
Time:	
Time:	
Time:	

Make additional copies of this form if you need them.

Review your observation notes and summaries as well as the suggestions you have read. Develop a plan for helping this child. Implement your plan over the next week, then record the results.

Plan:

Results (after one week):

Discuss this activity with your trainer. If your strategies have not helped this child progress, you may need to talk with his or her parents to learn more about what might be causing the behavior. The child's behavior may be affected by a physical condition such as illness, allergies, physical or learning disabilities, lack of sleep, or poor nutrition.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module probably has helped you develop new skills for promoting social development.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about promoting social development while you were working on this module. Compare your ideas to those in the completed chart at the end of the module.

- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview

(pp. 103-105)

Helping Children Learn to Get Along with Other Members of the Group

1. **How did Ms. Frilles help the girls find a way to continue their play?**
   a. *She provided an indirect suggestion when she told them about a restaurant that had two waitresses.*

   b. *She stepped back to let them make their own decision about how to play.*

2. **How did Ms. Frilles help the girls feel good about solving their problem?**
   a. *She told them they used good thinking.*

   b. *She left them alone so they could continue playing.*

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings and Respect Those of Others

1. **How did Ms. Kim let the children know that she understood and respected their feelings?**
   a. *She told them what she thought they might be feeling.*

   b. *She explained that she couldn't let them push each other.*

2. **How did Ms. Kim help the children to respect each other's feelings?**
   a. *She involved them in solving their own problem.*

   b. *She stepped back so the children could work things out for themselves.*

Providing an Environment and Experiences That Help Children Develop Social Skills

1. **How did Mr. Lopez use a daily routine—getting ready to go outside—as an opportunity to help the children develop social skills?**
   a. *He asked Jerry and Sukie to help Becky find her missing shoe.*

   b. *He said the bag of balls was heavy and asked for help to carry it.*

   c. *He said he likes it when children work together.*

2. **What social skills did the children learn as they prepared to go outside?**
   a. *They learned to work together and help each other.*

   b. *They learned to feel good about themselves because Mr. Lopez thinks all the children are important and he will wait until everyone is ready before going outside.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development

(p. 113)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Social Development
They can help to make and follow a few simple rules and limits.	*Involve children in making the rules for the classroom. Play simple games such as* Lotto *or* Go Fish *to help children learn to follow rules in play situations. Offer positive reminders: "Walk indoors, please" to help children follow rules.*
They are learning to share, cooperate, and take turns.	*Provide duplicates of popular play materials. Model these social skills, yourself. Set up a system for taking turns, such as providing four hooks next to an interest area for hanging up name tags because there's only room for four children to use the area at once.*
They like to imitate adult activities.	*Provide a variety of dress-up clothes and props for dramatic play. Add new items to build on children's interest. Replace items children are no longer using. Encourage children to do as much as they can for themselves.*
They carry on conversations with other children, in pairs and also in groups.	*Observe and listen to children's conversations to learn about group dynamics—who initiates play, who negotiates, who solves problems, who thinks of new ideas, and so on.*
They may exclude other children from their play.	*Observe to see how often and in what situations a child is excluded by the others. Help the child become a part of the group by offering an interesting prop or material to share, suggesting a role, or explaining why the children might be excluding the child—"It scares the others when you knocked the* Legos® *on the floor."*
They are moving from parallel to cooperative play.	*Observe often to see the kind of play in which a child is involved. Provide duplicates of items such as telephones or firefighter hats that encourage two or more children to use together.*
They continue to need opportunities for solitary play.	*Provide a variety of materials children can use alone—beads and strings, puzzles, books, paints, tricycles, and so on. Observe often to see when a child plays alone by choice, and when he or she might want to join others, but doesn't know how.*

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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development

(p. 114)

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Social Development**
They ask many questions.	*Use questions to engage children in a discussion but answer those that require a direct response. Include others in the discussion.*
They begin to develop friendships and may have a best friend.	*Follow a schedule that allows lots of time for children to choose their own playmates. Acknowledge children's friendships. "You and Paul had a good time riding tricycles together. I can tell you really like playing with each other." Tell parents who their children typically play with so they can support the friendship outside the center.*
They gain greater awareness of the larger community.	*Take the children on trips to the firehouse, parents' work sites, the pet store, the library, and so on. Prepare for trips by discussing what will happen and how children will be expected to behave. Invite parents and other visitors to come to the center to talk about what they do on the job or in the community.*
They engage in make-believe play alone and with others.	*Participate in play episodes by taking a role and helping children relate to others in the area. Suggest actions and offer props to promote play.*
They show pride in their own work, and they seek and value adult approval.	*Help children display their work. Take photographs to preserve block buildings and other creations that can't be saved. Give children lots of affection and encouragement. Let them know they are liked and that their accomplishments are noticed and valued.*
They have strong emotions and feelings and are learning to use words to name them.	*Encourage children to talk about their feelings. Help them understand how feelings and actions are connected and that they can have feelings without acting on them.*

Glossary

Cooperative play

The type of play that typically begins during the preschool years. Children play together in a group that they organize and control. The group has a specific purpose, such as making something, playing a game, or acting out a real-life or fantasy situation.

Parallel play

Play that happens when two- to three-year-old children progress from solitary play to playing alone with other children nearby. Children may use the same or similar kinds of toys or materials.

Peer

A friend or companion who is the same age or at the same developmental level.

Prosocial skills

Accepted behaviors, such as sharing or taking turns, which children learn and use to get along in society.

Social development

The gradual process through which children learn to enjoy being with other people and gain skills such as sharing, cooperating, and experiencing empathy.

Solitary play

The first stage of play, when infants and toddlers play alone, independent of other children. They use toys or materials that are the same as or different from those of other children in the group.

Module 10: Guidance

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Overview

Guiding children's behavior involves:

- Providing an environment that encourages self-discipline
- Using positive methods to guide individual children
- Helping children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways

Children need adult guidance to learn how to behave.

Children need adult guidance to help them learn what is acceptable and what is not, and to help them learn how to live cooperatively with others. How you offer this guidance depends on your goals for the children you teach. What kind of people do you want these children to become? Do you want them to behave a certain way out of fear, or because they have learned what is acceptable and what is not?

Self-discipline is the ability to control one's own behavior. People who are self-disciplined make independent choices based on what they believe is right. They are able to balance their own needs with those of others. They can accept the results of their actions.

Children are not born with self-discipline. As John Dewey, a famous American educator noted, adults need to provide positive guidance that teaches children to learn to make their own decisions, distinguish between right and wrong, solve problems, and correct their own mistakes. This module is about guiding children's behavior in ways that help them develop self-discipline.

There can be many reasons for children's misbehavior.

Children misbehave for a variety of reasons. Joanne might be at a developmental stage where she needs to test the limits of her own control. Ross may be forced into a schedule that conflicts with his natural rhythm. Dana may be confused because the rules and expectations at home differ from those at the center. Michelle may have difficulty coping with transitions resulting from her parents' separation. Sometimes, children behave inappropriately simply because they are bored, tired, curious, or frustrated. To help children learn self-discipline, teachers need to think about the reasons for children's behavior.

Because adults are powerful, they can force children to behave. But children who are forced to behave in certain ways, and are punished when they don't, learn the following lessons:

- I am a bad person.
- I need to watch out for adults.
- I had better not get caught.

These children are likely to behave only when someone is watching. Their goal is to avoid punishment. They do not learn to value acceptable behavior for itself, and they do not learn self-discipline.

Teachers can help children gain self-discipline in many ways. Some actions, such as setting up safe places for running, can prevent certain behaviors. Other actions, such as redirecting children to climb on the climber rather than the table, are responses to children's behavior.

Use the environment and appropriate strategies to help children learn self-discipline.

If you set up an environment that supports self-discipline, it will be easier for children to achieve this goal. If you set limits that fit children's development and individual needs, children will quickly learn the limits. If you are consistent in applying rules, children will try to follow them. And if you learn some techniques and words to use to guide children, you will help them develop self-discipline. Your caring relationships with the children in your room help them understand their feelings and those of others. Children depend on you and want your approval. They look to you to help them learn acceptable ways to express themselves.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in providing positive guidance to children. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Providing an Environment That Encourages Self-Discipline

Make sure there are no safety hazards.	"Mr. Lopez, that was a good idea to replace the indoor climber. It was just too large for the children in this group."
Store toys and equipment on low, open shelves.	"Sammy, it's time to clean up. You know where the blocks go on the shelf."
Involve children in making up rules for the group.	"Everyone has been crowding around our new guinea pig and he's getting scared. Let's think about what rules we need for taking care of him."
Prepare children in advance for changes.	"In five minutes, it will be time to clean up and get ready for lunch. I'll set the timer so you'll know when the five minutes are over."
Arrange the materials and furniture to encourage appropriate behavior.	"When Jacey needs to spend some time alone, she sits in the reading nook."
Follow a schedule that allows children to initiate their own activities for most of the day.	"Good morning, Rion. What would you like to do during choice time today?"

"I'm glad it's Friday," sighs Ms. Kim. "This has been a frustrating week. It seems as if the children are constantly fighting over the toys. And getting them to help with clean-up is like pulling teeth." Ms. Richards nods her head in agreement. "I know what you mean," she says. "We need to make some changes." Ms. Kim responds, "I've noticed that some of the children have a hard time sharing, which leads to disagreements. Maybe if we had more duplicates, sharing would be less of a problem." Ms. Richards says, "That's a good idea. I think the children would help with clean-up more if we make picture labels and tape them to the shelves and containers. Then the children will know where the toys and materials are stored. That way clean-up time will be more fun." Ms. Kim agrees. "Let's try both ideas. Maybe we can address the behavior problems by changing the environment."

1. **What behaviors did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards find frustrating?**

2. **How will changing the environment encourage children's self-discipline?**

Using Positive Methods to Guide Individual Children

Allow children to experience the consequences of their actions.	"Andrew, I'm very sorry you got wet at the water table. You can get a dry shirt from your cubby. What could you do differently next time so you'll stay dry?"
Redirect children to acceptable activities.	"Sukie's reading that book, Brandon. Pick another book to look at."
Help children who are screaming or thrashing regain self control.	"Dana, I'm holding you so you won't hurt yourself or anyone else. When you are calm and ready, I will let go and we can talk about what happened."
Use simple, positive reminders to restate rules.	"Please use the crayons on the paper, Jerry, not on the table."
Know when ignoring inappropriate behavior is constructive.	"Ms. Williams, I found one of the best ways to get children to stop using bathroom words is to just ignore them. If you don't react to the words, children soon stop using them."
Assume a firm, authoritarian role only when necessary to keep children safe.	"Stay on the sidewalk, Chaundra. A car is coming."

Ms. Williams and the children are outside in the play yard. Travis, a very active child, has collected some pine cones and is throwing them at other children. Ms. Williams walks over to him. She bends down, looks at him, and says, "Travis, you are learning to be a good thrower. But if you hit someone with a pine cone, they might be hurt or angry. Where can you practice your throwing safely?" Travis looks around and answers, "On the grass." Ms. Williams nods and says, "Yes, that's a good place. There aren't any children over there." Travis picks up his pine cones and walks over to the grass. Ms. Williams watches for a few minutes and then goes over to the sandbox to play with other children.

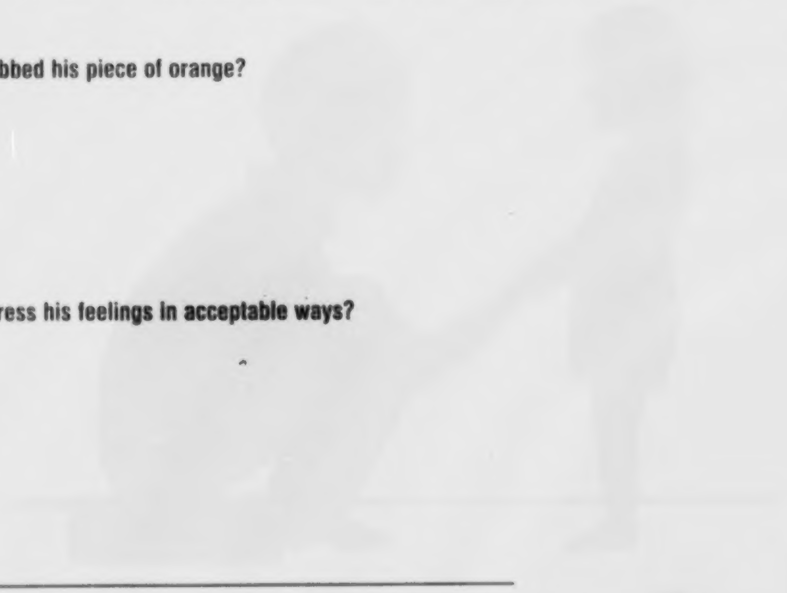
1. **What did Ms. Williams know about Travis?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams let Travis know that she respected him?**

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings in Acceptable Ways

Make it easier to share or wait for a turn.	"I know it's hard to wait. Here's your name on the list. Your turn is next."
Redirect an angry or frustrated child to a soothing activity.	"Jane, I can't let you hurt other people or things. I think you might have fun at the water table."
Tell children you accept their feelings, even when their actions are not acceptable.	"Trish, I know you are angry with Elicia but I can't let you hit her. Tell Elicia you don't like it when she calls you names."
Help children understand the effects of their actions on the environment, materials, and people.	"Vanessa screamed because it hurt when you accidentally pulled her hair. If you want to play with hair you can use the baby doll."
Model acceptable ways to express feelings.	"Brett and Lien Chau, please use your inside voices. Your loud voices hurt my ears."
Work with parents to help a child with a challenging behavior learn acceptable ways to express feelings.	"Mr. Harper, Sheila had a great day today. Our strategies for reminding her to use words to express herself are working well."

"No!" screams Billy. His arm extended, he leans over ready to hit Sam, who has just grabbed a piece of orange from Billy's plate. "Billy," says Mr. Lopez, extending his hand between Billy's hand and Sam's arm. Billy looks up at Mr. Lopez. "That was good stopping," Mr. Lopez says. "I know you don't like it when someone takes your things. It's okay to have those feelings. You can talk to people when you are angry, but I can't let you hit them. Tell Sam not to take your orange." Billy looks at Sam and says, "I don't want you to take my orange." Sam puts the piece of orange down and goes back to eating his lunch.



1. How do you think Billy felt when Sam grabbed his piece of orange?

2. How did Mr. Lopez help Billy learn to express his feelings in acceptable ways?

Your Own Self-Discipline

Much of our behavior is automatic. We don't stop to think about what we should do; we just do it. When you put money in a parking meter, come to work on time, or thank a store clerk, you are probably acting without thinking about what you are doing. You have learned and accepted certain rules of behavior, and because you have self-discipline, you don't need to be reminded of them.

Self-discipline guides your behavior at work.

- You let the center director know when you're sick so a substitute can be called.
- You let a colleague know you are angry with her by telling her what you feel.
- You volunteer to help a colleague who's having difficulty meeting a child's needs.

List a few examples of how self-discipline guides your behavior at work:

Self-discipline also guides your behavior at home.

- You remember to water the plants because you know they'll die if you don't.
- You clean the frying pan so it will be ready to use in the morning.
- You resist eating a piece of cake because you are watching your weight.

List some examples of how self-discipline guides your behavior at home:

Think of a time when you did not use self-discipline. What affected your loss of control?

What does your own experience tell you about what children need if they are to gain self-discipline?

Being in control of your own behavior frequently results in enhanced self-esteem. Having positive feelings about your abilities will make you a more effective and skilled teacher. Your self-discipline is a good model for the children. They will learn a lot from being cared for by a responsible and competent person.

When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of this module if you need definitions for the terms that are used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to provide guidance to children. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Providing an Environment That Encourages Self-Discipline

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
1. Make sure there are no safety hazards.	☐	☐	☐
2. Store toys and equipment on low, open shelves.	☐	☐	☐
3. Involve children in making up rules for the group.	☐	☐	☐
4. Prepare children in advance for changes.	☐	☐	☐
5. Arrange the materials and furniture to encourage appropriate behavior.	☐	☐	☐
6. Follow a schedule that allows children to initiate their own activities for most of the day.	☐	☐	☐

Using Positive Methods to Guide Individual Children

7. Allow children to experience the consequences of their actions.	☐	☐	☐
8. Redirect children to acceptable activities.	☐	☐	☐

Using Positive Methods to Guide Individual Children

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
9. Help children who are screaming or thrashing regain self-control.	☐	☐	☐
10. Use simple, positive reminders to restate rules.	☐	☐	☐
11. Know when ignoring inappropriate behavior is constructive.	☐	☐	☐
12. Assume a firm, authoritarian role only when necessary to keep children safe.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Understand and Express Feelings in Acceptable Ways

13. Make it easier to share or wait for a turn.	☐	☐	☐
14. Redirect an angry or frustrated child to a soothing activity.	☐	☐	☐
15. Tell children you accept their feelings, even when their actions are not acceptable.	☐	☐	☐
16. Help children understand the effects of their actions on the environment, materials, and people.	☐	☐	☐

Helping Children Understand and Express Feelings in Acceptable Ways

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
17. Model acceptable ways to express feelings.	☐	☐	☐
18. Work with parents to help a child with a challenging behavior learn acceptable ways to express feelings.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module you will list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 10, Guidance.

Learning Activities

I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Behavior

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize some typical behaviors of preschool children
- Use what you know about child development to help children develop self-discipline

There are identifiable milestones in emotional development.

Helping children learn self-discipline begins with knowing what children can and can't do at each stage of development. Knowing which behaviors are typical at different ages allows you to have appropriate expectations and plan a program that reflects developmental characteristics. For example:

- Most preschoolers cannot sit still for more than 10 to 15 minutes. Teachers can plan group time activities that match this time frame.
- Some preschoolers have toileting accidents. Teachers can ask parents to provide extra clothes and respond in a casual way when accidents do occur.
- Many preschoolers are still learning to share and take turns. Teachers can provide duplicates of popular toys and set up simple systems to help children see when it will be their turn to use a toy or join an activity.

Dr. Stanley Greenspan has defined several early childhood milestones that are the foundation for healthy emotional development.[1] Children who master these milestones are more likely to learn self-discipline than those who do not. Greenspan's five milestones are described below.

"Security and the ability to look, listen, and be calm."

The first milestone allows children to get involved in their play and activities. Most children begin learning this skill during the first few months of life. They enjoy being with their parents and caregivers; develop a regular schedule for sleeping; look at and listen to their environment; and in general, feel comfortable with life. Children who have accomplished this milestone can sit and listen to a story or the instructions for a new fingerplay. Children who have not reached this milestone are easily distracted and may have difficulty choosing what they want to do because the options are overwhelming.

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[1] Based with permission on Dr. Stanley Greenspan, *Playground Politics, Understanding the Emotional Life of Your School-Age Child* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1993).

"Relating: the ability to feel warm and close to others."

The second milestone allows children to enjoy being with others. It is based on the trust that typically develops during infancy as a child interacts with and depends on parents and other caregivers. Most of children's early learning comes from their relationships with others. For example, infants begin to understand cause and effect when they learn their cries will bring someone to their side or that their smiles will get smiles in return. Children who feel close to others can play alone and easily join a group at play. Children who haven't developed warm, trusting relationships are likely to have difficulty making friends and becoming part of the group. They may use aggression to get what they want, or play and work alone because they fear rejection.

"Intentional two-way communication without words."

The third milestone allows children to understand and respond appropriately to nonverbal cues. Children build on the two previous milestones—paying attention and feeling close to others—as they learn to communicate with others. This milestone begins when infants learn that facial expressions and body language are signs of thoughts and feelings. An infant responds to a parent's frown by crying or wiggles with delight upon seeing a parent's open arms. Infants soon learn to use nonverbal communication to express their wants and needs—for example, a baby might point at a toy on the table so an older brother will get it for her.

Children who have mastered this milestone can observe nonverbal cues and accurately "read" other people's expectations, desires, and feelings. Children who have not mastered this milestone may misinterpret the actions of others and have trouble being accepted by the group. An example follows.

> Kate and Drew stand side-by-side talking and painting pictures. Drew becomes interested in what is happening in the house corner. He leaves the art area to join the group playing house. Kate doesn't understand why her friend left. She had not observed Drew's interest in the house corner area. She thinks he doesn't like her, and because she feels rejected, she calls after Drew, "You can't leave. You didn't clean up." The other children want Drew to join them so they take his side, "He already cleaned up." Kate has no idea what happened, but she now feels rejected by Drew and by the other children. Kate's teacher observes this episode and steps in to help Kate understand what happened. "You feel bad because Drew went to play with the other children. Drew is still your friend. He didn't want to paint any more. He watched the children in the house corner and decided to join them. Do you want to finish your painting or do something else?"

"Emotional ideas."

This milestone allows children to use words to express their feelings. Children with this ability can create mental pictures of what they want, need, or feel. When something happens that makes them feel angry they can give this feeling a name, rather than responding with tears, a tantrum, or pouting. A child who feels angry can say to himself, "I am angry." Preschoolers use this skill to explore feelings through dramatic play by imagining how a character might feel in a situation.

Children who cannot use words to express their feelings and ideas often have trouble controlling their actions. As a result, they tend to act without thinking because they don't know they can have a feeling without an action—be sad without crying, angry without hitting, or frustrated without tearing up a picture. Instead of using words to express their feelings, they respond by hitting another child, throwing a toy, or crying. Here is an example:

> Neil is watering the garden with a hose. When Quentin walks by, Neil aims the hose and says playfully, "I'm going to water you, too." When water drips on Quentin's sneakers, he grabs the hose, pushes Neil, and says, "You are stupid." Quentin had not noticed the playful tone in Neil's voice and he didn't know how to express his feelings—anger at having wet sneakers—so he pushed Neil and called him "stupid." Quentin's teacher can help him learn to recognize and understand nonverbal cues such as tone of voice and to use words instead of aggression to express his feelings.

"Emotional thinking."

The fifth milestone enables children to understand the consequences of their actions. Children learn to link different kinds of ideas and feelings to understand how one relates to another. For example, a preschool child might think, "I am disappointed because it's raining and now I can't play outside." An important part of emotional thinking is understanding that there are consequences to actions. Being able to consider consequences allows children to think what might happen as a result of their actions. This helps children learn to handle frustration, set aside immediate gratification for future rewards, and work hard at difficult tasks. Children who can't use emotional thinking may have difficulty understanding how their actions affect future events. Here is an example.

> Fran spent the whole morning on the computer. Each time Yancey asked for a turn she said, "No." After naptime, Yancey was using the computer. When Fran asked for a turn, he said, "No! It's my turn." Fran told Ms. Dodd; "Yancey won't let me have a turn on the computer." Yancey explained to Ms. Dodd that he had been waiting for a turn since the morning. Ms. Dodd took Fran aside and tried to explain why Yancey wouldn't let her have a turn. Fran responded, "It's not fair. I want my turn."

Greenspan's milestones are the foundation for developing self-discipline and positive behavior. Some of the children in your group will have reached these milestones, others will be working towards them. Your observations of children will help you determine what each child can do so help you can provide support and encouragement tailored to encourage each child's development of self-discipline.

Applying Your Knowledge

The chart on the next page identifies some typical behaviors of preschool children, ages 3 to 5. Included are behaviors relevant to developing self-discipline. The right column asks you to identify ways teachers can use this information to guide children's behavior. Try to think of as many examples as you can. As you work through the module you will learn new strategies and you can add them to the chart. You are not expected to think of all the examples at one time. If you need help getting started, turn to the completed chart at the end of this module. By the time you complete this module, you will find that you have learned many ways to guide children's behavior so they can develop self-discipline.

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Behavior

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Guide Children's Behavior**
They seek adult approval and attention.	*Notice and comment on children's positive behaviors and accomplishments, such as participating in clean-up, helping a friend, or finishing a difficult puzzle. Try to spend some one-on-one time with each child every day.*
They try new things and take risks.	
They can take turns and share, but they don't always want to.	
They sometimes lose control; they may scream or strike out in anger at children or adults.	
They are gaining new physical skills and have a lot of energy.	
They may swear or use bathroom words to get attention or without knowing what the words mean.	

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Behavior

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Guide Children's Behavior**
They want to do things for themselves, but may get upset if things don't go as expected.	
They can follow a few simple rules.	
They like to feel powerful and important, and they can be bossy.	
They are learning to use words to express their feelings and to solve problems.	
They are most comfortable when the daily schedule is consistent and predictable.	
They are learning to recognize how their actions affect the environment, materials, and other people.	

When you have completed as much as you can do on the chart, discuss your answers with your trainer. As you proceed with the rest of the learning activities, you can refer back to the chart and add examples of ways that teachers can guide children's behavior.

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II. Creating an Environment That Supports Self-Discipline

In this activity you will learn to:

- Observe children's behavior to identify possible problems in the environment
- Create an environment that encourages children to develop self-discipline

There are times when no matter how hard you try, everything seems to go wrong. The children seem restless. They run around the classroom, fight over toys, and wander about unable to choose things to do. Most of the children seem easily distracted and have trouble sticking with tasks. They use materials roughly and are uncooperative at clean-up time.

The physical environment can be a cause of behavior problems.

There are many possible reasons for these behaviors. Most preschool children act in these ways sometimes, but, if you see many of these behaviors day after day, it's a good idea to check your environment by asking questions such as these:

- Does the furniture arrangement create open spaces that encourage children to run?
- Are the materials too simple or too difficult for the children's current skill levels?
- Do I limit or cancel outdoor play when it's cold or wet outside?
- Do I prohibit physical activities indoors?
- Do children spend most of the day doing adult-led activities?

If you answer "yes" to most of these questions, your environment may be negatively affecting children's behavior.

The chart on the following page provides examples of children's behavior, possible problems in the environment, and suggested solutions.

Behavior	Possible Problems	Suggested Solutions
Children can't find their belongings—hats, mittens, items from home. (They spend time trying to locate belongings or tell teachers they can't find them.)	Children don't have individual cubbies. Cubbies aren't labeled with children's names, photographs, or symbols.	Provide individual, labeled cubbies within children's reach. Help children make a rule about only taking things from their own cubby.
Children run indoors.	There is no limit to the number of children who can use each area. There are limits, but they allow too many children to use the area at one time. The room is not divided into various interest areas—too much open space. There are no indoor physical activities. Children need to have more time for outdoor play.	Establish a system to limit the number of children who can use each area at a time. Eliminate large, open spaces by creating interest areas. Provide equipment for indoor physical activities—climber, tumbling mats, hula hoops—or use the halls or an empty classroom for active play. Go outdoors daily unless the weather is very cold or wet.
Children fight over toys and materials. (They try to grab toys away from others, or push or shove other children away from toys they are playing with.)	There is only one of each toy and there aren't enough of materials such as crayons, scissors, musical instruments. There aren't enough toys and materials that match children's current skills and interests.	Provide duplicates of popular items so children don't have to wait too long to use them. Order sufficient art materials for the size of the group. Set up a system for waiting—provide timers, install hooks for hanging up name tags, or have a waiting list.
Children lose control and hurt others. (They shove others or throw objects at children or adults.)	There are no private areas where children can go to regain control of their emotions and actions.	Create private areas—a large box, a pile of pillows in the corner, a small table with room for one child, a sheet draped over three sides of a table.
Children refuse to participate in activities. (They respond negatively to an invitation to participate or walk away from an activity.)	Most of the day is spent in adult-led activities. The activities do not reflect children's interests.	Follow a schedule that allows ample time for children to select activities. Observe children and plan activities that respond to their interests.

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The environment can promote positive behavior.

An appropriate environment for preschoolers can support their development of self-discipline in a number of ways. Children feel independent when they can select and replace materials that are stored on low, open shelves. Children learn to care for their own belongings when each has a cubby in which to keep personal items. Children feel valued when their interests, ethnicity, and culture are reflected in the toys, books, materials, and displays. Children gain a sense of competence when the materials offer challenges without being overwhelming. In such an environment, children feel respected and become involved in purposeful activities.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you will review some common behavior problems and note how the environment can be the cause—or the solution. Then you will describe problem behaviors that occur in your group and plan ways to change your environment so it addresses these behaviors and promotes self-discipline.

Arranging the Environment to Promote Self-Discipline

Behavior	**Possible Problems**	**Suggested Solutions**
Children wander around and have difficulty choosing something to do.		
Children are easily distracted and have trouble staying with and completing tasks.		
Children use materials roughly and resist clean-up.		
Children frequently ask teachers for assistance in getting out materials.		
Children run around outside without using toys or equipment or participating in activities.		

Check your answers with answer sheet at the end of the module. There can be more than one right answer.

Now, think about a typical day with the children in your group. Use the following chart to describe the problem behaviors that tend to occur again and again. For each behavior, identify possible problems in the environment, then suggest one or more solutions and try them out.

Behavior	Possible Problems	Suggested Solutions

Discuss your ideas with your trainer and colleagues before trying them out. If the problem behaviors continue after you make changes to the environment, be sure to consider other causes for the behaviors of individual children and for the group.

III. Guiding Children's Behavior

In this activity you will learn to:

- Use positive approaches to guide children's behavior
- Tailor positive guidance to match each child's skills and needs

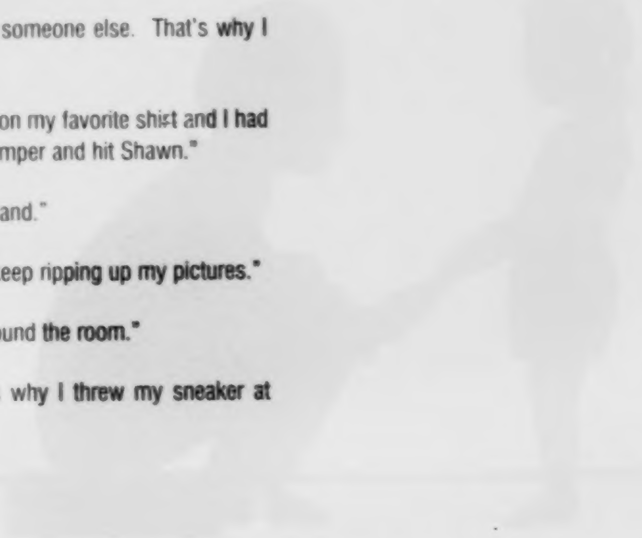
Discipline and punishment are very different.

Often the words *discipline* and *punishment* are used to mean the same thing, but they are actually very different. Punishment means controlling children's behavior through fear. Punishment makes children behave because they are afraid of what might happen to them if they don't. Punishment may stop children's negative behavior temporarily, but it doesn't help children develop self-discipline. Instead, it may reinforce their bad feelings about themselves.

Discipline means guiding and directing children toward acceptable behavior. The most important goal of discipline is to help children learn how to control their own behavior. Children are not born with self-control. It is learned through daily interactions with other children and adults. It takes a long time to learn self-discipline, but it is time well spent. Children who are self-disciplined tend to be more successful in school and in life. They can set goals and take the steps needed to accomplish them. They find it easier to get along with their peers and with adults.

Children express feelings through behavior.

Many preschoolers do not understand their feelings or how to express them. Even children with strong verbal skills might not understand feelings and can find it hard to express them with words. When children destroy materials, don't follow the rules, or hurt others, it is important to think about what their behavior means. What is the child trying to express? What are the reasons behind the behavior? Children's behaviors may be "telling" you many different things.



> "I feel lonely because my friend is playing with someone else. That's why I can't find anything to do."
>
> "I am angry because this morning I spilled juice on my favorite shirt and I had to wear something else. That's why I lost my temper and hit Shawn."
>
> "I am afraid. That's why I won't let go of your hand."
>
> "I want to be good at something. That's why I keep ripping up my pictures."
>
> "I need some limits. That's why I'm running around the room."
>
> "I can't do what you asked me to do. That's why I threw my sneaker at the wall."

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Accept children's negative feelings.

It's important for teachers to recognize and accept children's negative feelings. We all have days when we feel bad or don't want to do certain tasks. Through observation, you can learn to recognize the signs that a child is feeling upset. Then you can respond by suggesting ways to express feelings without hurting oneself, other people, or the toys and materials. For example, when you see children who seem frustrated, redirect them to soothing activities that might help them feel better. Many children are comforted by pounding playdough, playing with sand or rice in a basin, or listening to music. There are no right or wrong ways to do activities such as these. Children can enjoy them without worrying about being successful. When children feel very angry, tossing beanbags or hammering may allow them to release their strong feelings.

Teachers can use a variety of approaches to guide children's behavior. No single approach works for every child or every situation. Effective discipline makes use of positive guidance techniques that are:

- based on realistic expectations for children's behavior and reflect an understanding of child development and each child's unique characteristics.

- individualized to match the situation and the child's skills and needs.

On the following page you will find suggestions of positive guidance approaches that might work for the children in your care.

Positive Guidance Approach	Examples
Reinforce children's positive behaviors during private moments.	"Peter, it was nice of you to give André the helicopter to play with."
Help children solve their own problems.	"I can see it is hard for you to share your bear, Carlos. Where can you put it until you go home?"
Anticipate problem behaviors and plan ways to avoid them.	"Let's talk about what will happen on our trip tomorrow. First, how are we going to get to the fire house?"
Discuss the possible reasons for a child's behavior with a colleague or your supervisor.	"Bonita's mother is going out of town next week. Maybe Bonita is afraid she won't come back."
See your environment and hear yourself through a child's eyes and ears.	"Was my voice too loud just then? I'll move closer and speak more softly to Joey."
Respond to the child's behavior, without labeling the child.	"I like the way you cleared your dishes." (Rather than, "You're a good girl for clearing your dishes.")
Help children understand the consequences of their actions, and, if appropriate, help them make amends.	"Felipe and Kim, the doll broke when you were both pulling its arms. Put it in the fix-it box. You can play with it again after it has been repaired."
Tell children what they can do, rather than what they cannot do.	"If you want to use the truck, you can roll it on the carpet. If you want to play in the house corner, you will have to put the truck away."
Be polite to children at all times.	"Could you please help me by holding my bag for a minute? Thank you."
Help children get over minor mistakes and accidents—their own or other children's.	"Whoops! Did your paint cup tip over? Did your silly elbow do it? Let's find a sponge to clean up the spill!"
Encourage children to move their bodies when they seem restless.	"Susan, you seem fidgety. Would you like to use the tumbling mats or join Tammy on the climber?"
Individualize rules and limits when needed to meet a child's needs.	"Eyonna, I see you need a few more minutes to finish your picture. We'll start cleaning up and you can join us when you're done."
Gain control of your own angry feelings before disciplining a child. Ask a colleague for help if needed.	"Mr. Lopez, could you please help Wendy pick up the Legos® she threw on the floor? I need to calm down before I talk to her about her behavior."

The chart that follows shows some typical behaviors of preschool children and some positive guidance approaches teachers can use to encourage self-discipline.

Typical Behavior	Positive Guidance Approach
Dana and Lorrie fight over a funnel at the water table. Lorrie is using the funnel.	Help the children find a way to take turns. Provide a prop for Dana to use while waiting for a turn. Write yourself a note to buy or make another funnel.
Mia writes on the table.	Calmly remind Mia of the classroom rule: "Draw and write on paper, not on furniture." Have her make amends by getting a wet sponge to clean the table.
Carla is very restless during group time.	One teacher can sit near Carla to help her focus on the activity. If Carla needs to get up, one of the teachers can help her select a quiet activity such as drawing a picture or reading a book.
The whole group is restless at group time.	Shorten the group activity and move on to choice time.
Jay and Raffi bump into each other by accident.	Make sure nobody is hurt. Encourage the children to laugh about the collision: "You guys made such a loud noise, I thought the building was falling down."
Janna, who used to forget, hangs up her coat three days in a row.	Use genuine praise to reinforce the behavior: "You remembered to hang up your coat three days in a row. You're doing a good job taking care of your belongings."

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you will keep track of how you guide the behavior of an individual child over a three-day period. Take notes on the child's behavior, the possible reason for the behavior, and the positive guidance you use in response. After reading your notes, think about what you learned from the experience that you can use to promote self-discipline. Begin by reviewing the example that follows.

Guiding Children's Behavior

(Example)

Child: *Shawn* **Age:** *4 years 3 months*

Setting: *Table Toys Area* **Date:** *February 6* **Time:** *10:45 a.m.*

Child's Behavior	**Possible Reason for the Behavior**	**Positive Guidance Used in Response**
Shawn was doing a puzzle. He couldn't get the pieces to fit. He knocked the puzzle pieces on the floor and left the area.	*Shawn was frustrated possibly because the puzzle was too hard for him. He might have been hungry because snack was late today. In the past, being hungry has affected his behavior.*	*I found Shawn in the book area and said, "Would you like some help picking up the puzzle pieces?" He came back to the table toys area. While picking up the puzzle we talked about how to take care of materials. I asked him if he was hungry. He said, "Yeah. My tummy is grumbling." I said, "Snack is late today. Would you like a graham cracker to take the grumbles away?" He nodded.*

What did you learn that you can use to promote self-discipline?

We should have some food available so children who are hungry don't have to wait.

Shawn needs help selecting puzzles that are neither too easy nor too difficult so he can experience success.

Shawn quickly recovered from his loss of control and was willing to make amends.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Child: ______________________ **Age:** ________________

Day One

Setting: ______________________ **Date:** ________________ **Time:** ____________

Child's Behavior	Possible Reason for the Behavior	Positive Guidance Used in Response

Day Two

Setting: ______________________ **Date:** ________________ **Time:** ____________

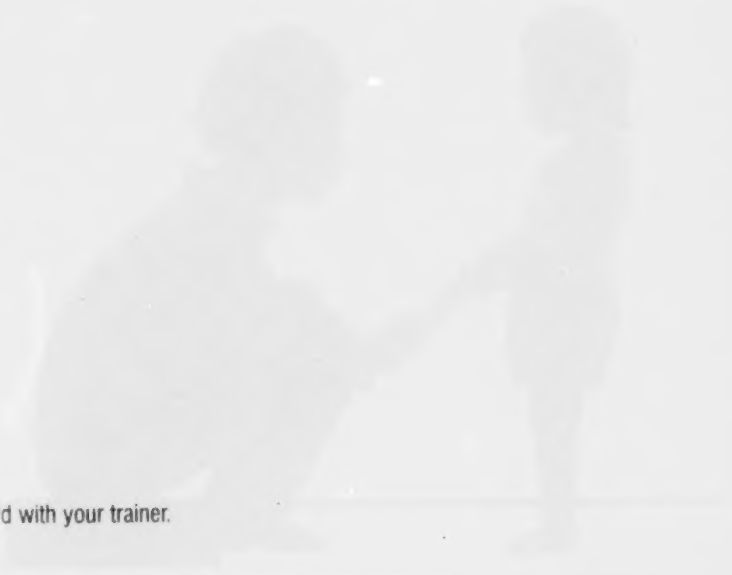
Child's Behavior	Possible Reason for the Behavior	Positive Guidance Used in Response

Day Three

Setting: ______________________ **Date:** __________________ **Time:** ____________

Child's Behavior	Possible Reason for the Behavior	Positive Guidance Used in Response

How can you use what you learned about this child to promote self-discipline?



Discuss your observations and responses to this child with your trainer.

IV. Using Words to Provide Positive Guidance

In this activity you will learn to:

- Use words to guide children's behavior
- Use words to remind children of rules and limits

Your words and tone of voice are powerful guidance tools.

Children listen to and understand what you say to them. Your words and tone of voice can be powerful positive guidance tools. Angry, insensitive words can make children feel sad, ashamed, or angry. Using words in a positive way, however, can promote children's self-discipline. Your caring words help children understand their own feelings and those of others.

Adults often use a loud "discipline voice" when talking to children. When adults shout, children sometimes get so startled that they don't really hear the words. It is better to talk to children in a natural though firm tone of voice. When children hear a quiet, firm tone, they are more likely to feel safe and cared for. When conversing with a child, try to get close enough to speak at a normal level. If you are having a private discussion, crouch or kneel at the child's level. Look into the child's eyes and gently touch an arm or shoulder. Give the child your full attention, and make sure you have the child's attention. (Note: In some families and cultures, children are taught that it is disrespectful to look an adult in the eye. Be sensitive to cultural differences.)

If you're not sure how your voice sounds when you're talking to children, try videotaping or audiotaping a part of the day. Play the tape and ask yourself, "Would I like to listen to this person all day?"

Choose your words carefully so children can focus on the real issues.

The words you use are very important. Sometimes, an adult who is angry with a child lets out an emotional flood of words. This may make the adult feel better, but the child probably does not hear the message. To help the child understand your message, use simple, clear statements, spoken once:

Describe what happened:

> "Theresa, you tore Joey's pictures two times this morning."

Tell the child what behavior is not acceptable:

> "I can't let you tear other children's work."

Tell the child what behavior is acceptable:

> "Leave Joey's paper alone. It's his work."

Suggest a consequence and, if appropriate, a way to make amends:

> "Joey feels bad because you tore his picture. Let's get some tape and fix it. Then you can tear some magazines for a collage, or you can read a story with me."

In this example, the child was offered two choices, both of which were acceptable to the teacher. Be careful to offer choices only when you mean them. When you ask a child "would you like to clean up now?" it sounds as if the child has a choice. The child could easily say "no." Probably you really mean, "it's time to pick up now."

Teachers can use words to give directions in a positive way. Instead of saying "no running" or "don't leave your coat on the floor," you can say "walk" or "hang your coat on the hook." Children respond well to positive directions because they tell them what to do, rather than what not to do.

Teachers should be positive and respectful in guiding children's behavior.

Your words can show respect for children's feelings and help them feel good about themselves. Avoid comparing one child to another. Instead of saying "Susan is nice and quiet at story time—can you be quiet like Susan?" you could say, "Please be quiet now so we can begin the story." Avoid using phrases such as "four-year-olds don't suck their thumbs." They make children feel bad, and they do not change behaviors.

The chart on the following page provides some examples of words teachers can use to provide positive guidance.

Situation	What a Teacher Might Say
Both Emilio and Tim want to sit next to Ms. Kim as she reads aloud to them in the book corner.	"There's enough space for each of you to sit right next to me. Emilio, you can sit on the right. Tim, you can sit on the left. Then we can share this big pillow and the book."
Maddie and Vanessa each want to use all of the cylinder blocks.	"There are many shapes of blocks for you to use on the shelves. There are only six cylinder-shaped blocks. Can you figure out a way to divide the cylinder blocks so you can each use some of them?"
Dean wants to play in the house corner with two children who don't want him to join them.	"Dean, it feels bad when your friends say they don't want to play with you. It's hard to understand why they want to just play with each other. Can I help you find something else to do? There's room at the work bench, or you could invite some friends to join you in starting a new game."
Lloyd and Chaundra each want to play in the same area but they think there isn't enough room.	"There is room for both of you to play with your trucks. You can share the space. I'll get some masking tape while you two decide how you want to divide the space."

Using words to guide children's behavior takes some practice. It may take some time before you feel comfortable talking to preschool children in new ways. You will be rewarded when the children you care for let you know how much better they feel because of your understanding and caring.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will practice using words to guide children's behavior and help them learn self-discipline. First read the examples that follow. Then write down words that you can use in typical classroom situations.

Words You Use to Provide Positive Guidance

(Example)

When a child pushes another child:

> *"Jorge, you want to use the doll carriage but you may not push Debby out of the way. She was already wheeling the carriage. Ask Debby if you can have a turn. If she says yes, you can use the carriage. If she says no, you must wait for your turn."*

When a child takes playdough from another child:

> *"You may have some of your own playdough. You may not take Tamila's playdough from her. Ask Tamila to share her playdough, or ask me for some."*

When a child paints on another child's picture:

> *"You may paint a picture of your own. I can't let you paint on Lamont's paper. You can have your own piece of paper, and Lamont can have another piece too. Or, you can ask Lamont if he wants to paint a picture with you."*

When a child is having a hard time waiting for a turn:

> *"Marguerite, you've waited a long time for the trike. You're getting tired of waiting so you called Ana stupid. You may not call her stupid. She is not stupid and neither are you. You can tell Ana that you have waited a long time and want your turn now."*

When a child screams because there aren't enough of one kind of toy:

> It's okay to want to have your own shovel like the other children. But screaming doesn't help you get a shovel. You need to use your words. Ask if anyone is finished using their shovel. Or, I can help you find something else to dig with."

When a child is upset because a friend won't play:

> *"You want to play with Kenny, so you feel sad when he says no. He* ***feels like playi****ng alone now. You* ***can play by*** *yourself on the jungle gym, or ask someone else to play with you."*

Words You Use to Provide Positive Guidance

When a child calls another child "stupid":

When a child refuses to clean up:

When a child watches other children playing but doesn't know how to join in:

When a child talks very loudly:

When a child is upset because it's too rainy to go outside:

When (add your own example here):

Now share your words with your trainer. To help you get to used to using these words, you could write them on a piece of poster board and hang it in your room.

V. Setting Rules and Limits

In this activity you will learn to:

- Set clear, simple rules and limits
- Remind children of rules by using positive statements that tell children what to do
- Apply rules consistently, while also considering individual needs

Children need a few simple rules.

Rules and limits help both children and teachers agree on what behaviors are acceptable. Young children need simple rules that are stated clearly and positively. For example, "Walk when you're indoors so you don't hurt yourself," rather than "Don't run indoors," tells children what they can do and why. Children feel safer when they know that adults have set limits. These feelings of security tend to make children feel freer to explore and experiment.

It's important to have just enough rules to keep your classroom functioning smoothly. If there are too few rules, the children might be unsafe and the environment disorderly. When there are too many rules, however, children can't remember what to do and might feel inadequate. Children feel a sense of mastery when they can remember and follow a few, simple, important rules.

Children can help create rules.

Children respect rules when they understand the reasons behind them. They are more likely to follow rules if they help create them. Talk to children about the consequences of actions. "What might happen if we squirt water on the floor?" Children can answer the question and suggest a needed rule: "When the water spills, the floor gets slippery. Someone might fall and get hurt. Keep the water in the water table." (See Learning Activity V, Helping Children Learn to Keep Themselves Safe, in Module 1, Safe, for an example of children creating safety rules.)

Some rules and limits are set by the way the room is arranged. You can label the interest areas to show how many children can play there at a time. (How the environment affects children's behavior is discussed in Learning Activity II, Creating an Environment That Supports Self-Discipline.)

Sometimes it is appropriate to individualize the rules.

All adults in the room need to apply the rules and limits consistently so the children will learn what they are expected to do. "Ms. Williams, we should remind the children not to run near the water table—Kim slipped today." However, in some situations it is appropriate to "bend" the rules to meet a child's needs. Consider the following example:

> Rhonda joined the class a few weeks ago. Her parents recently separated and this is Rhonda's first time attending child care. She has had a difficult time adjusting to the changes in her life and shows little interest in classroom

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activities. Recently, Rhonda discovered painting. Painting seems to allow Rhonda to express her feelings and to release tension. One of the classroom rules states that if someone is waiting for a turn at the easel, children should limit their paintings to no more than two at a time. Because painting is helping Rhonda meet her needs, the teachers decide to bend the rules so Rhonda can paint for as long as she needs to. One teacher tells Rhonda, "I think you like to paint. It helps you feel more comfortable here. When you feel ready, you can try some of our other activities. For now, you can paint as many pictures as you like." The teachers also explain the situation to the other children, "Rhonda is still getting used to our classroom. Until she feels ready to try other activities, we will let her paint as many pictures as she likes."

Positive reminders help children learn what to do.

Many times during the day teachers need to remind children of the rules and limits. Children are more likely to internalize the rules when the reminders are positive and delivered in a brief, firm manner. Some examples of negative and positive reminders follow.

To Respond to This Behavior	Say or Do This
Several children are talking too loudly.	"Use quiet voices inside; you can talk loudly outside."
A child hits another child.	"I can't let you hurt other children. Tell me what happened. Maybe I can help you solve the problem."
A child throws a shovel.	"Use the shovel to dig with; if you want to throw something, you can throw the ball."
A child is climbing on the table.	"Keep your feet on the floor. Climb only on the climber."
A child pushes another child on the slide.	"Keep your hands off other children. It's dangerous to push someone on the slide."
A child stands up and gets in the way of the others at story time.	"Please sit down on the rug. I'll hold the book up high so everyone can see."
A child swears at another child.	"Please don't use those words here. I don't want to hear them, and I don't want the other children to learn them."
A child absent-mindedly drips paint on the floor.	"Wipe your brush on the jar, so the paint won't drip."

As children develop new skills, review and revise the rules.

Rules should reflect what children are like at each stage of development. As children grow and mature, they can handle more freedom, activities, and responsibilities. Teachers need to be careful observers to see when individual children or the whole group can handle greater freedom. There is a fine line between keeping children safe and keeping them from growth and independence. The limits set for four-year-olds in September may need to be adjusted in a few months' time.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you will use positive phrases to list the rules you have in your room. Then you will answer some questions about one of the rules. First read the example, then complete the blank forms that follow.

Rules for the Preschool Room

(Example)

Staying healthy and safe:

Serve yourself as much food as you think you can eat.

Stay in the playground during outdoor play.

Respecting the rights of others:

Stay out of other people's cubbies.

When you want to be alone, you can sit on the pillows.

Not hurting yourself or others:

Blocks are for building, not for throwing.

Go down the slide one at a time.

Caring for our equipment and materials:

Everyone helps at clean-up time.

Turn the pages in books carefully so they don't tear.

Select a rule from your list and answer the questions below.

Rule: *Everyone helps at clean-up time*

Why do you have this rule?

Our room is set up so that children can get toys themselves and put them back when they are finished. They can be independent and learn self-discipline.

How do you fit this rule to each child's development, strengths, and needs?

Most of the children can clean up by themselves. For the children who need help, we break down the tasks into smaller ones—first, hang up the clothes, then put the pots and pans on the shelf.

How do you make sure that all adults apply the rule in the same way?

We both work with the children at clean-up time. If there are problems with consistency, we discuss them at nap time.

How do you follow through and support your words with actions?

If a child doesn't respond, I walk over to the child. Then I kneel or crouch and repeat the reminder: "Peter, it's pick-up time." If reminders don't work, I might lift a child off the climber, take a brush out of a hand, help put the puzzle pieces back, and so on.

Give an example of a simple clear statement that states the rule positively.

"It's clean-up time. After we put the toys away we can go outside."

What might you say to respect and acknowledge a child's feelings?

"Juana, I know it's hard to stop playing when you're having fun. You can play some more after nap time."

How do you act with authority and show confidence?

I always give children a ten-minute warning, then a five-minute warning. I never apologize when I announce that it's clean-up time. When a child is slow to stop playing, I walk over and restate that it is clean-up time. I don't ask the child to clean up. I just say, "It's clean-up time."

Rules for the Preschool Room

Staying healthy and safe:

Respecting the rights of others:

Not hurting yourself or others:

Caring for our equipment and materials:

Discuss these rules with a colleague who also works in your room

Select a rule from your list. Answer the questions that follow.

Rule: ____

Why do you have this rule?

How do you fit this rule to each child's development, strengths, and needs?

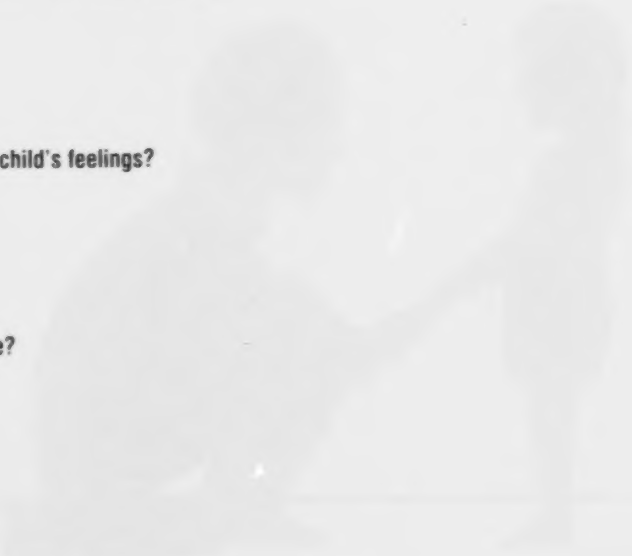
How do you make sure that all adults apply the rule in the same way?

How do you follow through and support your words with actions?

Give an example of a clear, simple statement that states the rule positively.

What might you say to respect and acknowledge a child's feelings?

How do you act with authority and show confidence?



Discuss this activity with your trainer.

VI. Responding to Challenging Behaviors

In this activity you will learn to:

- Look for the reasons behind a child's challenging behavior
- Work with parents to develop a plan for responding to challenging behavior

Some annoying behaviors are signs of normal development.

Some children's behaviors that drive teachers and parents crazy are actually signs of normal development. These behaviors give way to new ones when children move to the next stage of development. For example:[2]

> Gerry (3 years) spills his milk at lunch almost every day. He wants to do things for himself and doesn't notice when he elbows his cup.
>
> Kim (3 1/2 years) shouts, "I'm coming to get you monsters!" and chases the other children around the playground. This beginning stage of dramatic play helps her feel powerful and in control of her fears.
>
> Chuck (4 years) is very interested in watching Sarah (4-1/2 years) get undressed. He is very curious about the differences between boys and girls.
>
> Trevor (4-1/2 years) always wants to win and be the "biggest" and the "best." He is developing a sense of self and needs activities that don't involve winners and losers.
>
> Katherine (5 years) bosses the younger children around. "No, not like that. Do it this way." She feels good about her growing skills and has a sense of competence.

There are many possible reasons for challenging behaviors.

Challenging behaviors, such as biting or having temper tantrums, are likely to occur again and again. Often these behaviors are an indication that something in the child's life is disturbing. The child doesn't know how to express his or her feelings with words, so he or she acts out. It is important to remember that, in most cases, there is a reason for a child's behavior. Some reasons children use challenging behaviors are described below:[3]

---

[2] Based on California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Making a Difference* (San Francisco, CA: California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 1986), pp. 14-15.

[3] Based on Project ETC, Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association and Portage Project, *Special Training for Special Needs: Module 5, Program Implementation* (Minneapolis: Portage Project, 1989).

Children are affected by a physical condition. Health problems and conditions such as illness, allergies, disabilities, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, or hunger can contribute to children's misbehavior. Learning disabilities and conditions such as attention deficit disorder (ADD) can cause a child to have difficulty following rules or getting along with others. When a child frequently or consistently has difficulty behaving appropriately, consider the possibility of physical causes. You and your colleagues can discuss examples of the child's behavior with the parents and request that the child be evaluated by a physician.

Children don't know what they are supposed to do. Sometimes teachers give children brief instructions delivered in an authoritative voice. "Pick up." "Get ready." "Use the brush properly." They assume that children already know how to respond to these requests. However, some children don't understand vague words such as "properly" and aren't likely to ask what the strange word means. Other children need a teacher to show them what to do and how to do it. For example, a teacher could show a child how to hold a brush so the paint doesn't drip onto his or her hand.

Children need more attention than they are getting. Children need to feel important and valued. When children don't receive enough positive attention, they may act out to get negative attention. Their need for attention is so great they "misbehave" because it will get adults to notice them and spend time with them. Unfortunately, once children are successful in getting attention by misbehaving, they are likely to continue the unacceptable behavior until the cycle is broken.

Children feel bored or confined. Most children need new materials and activities that respond to their growing skills and changing interests. Even in the most interesting and varied environment, some children will be bored because they can't find something to do. It helps to make an extra effort to consider these children's unique characteristics when planning activities and selecting new materials.

Children are seeking more control of the situation. Some children have very few opportunities to make decisions or to have control over their lives. Perhaps between home and the center there are too many rules and too few opportunities to make choices. When children can choose what to do, which materials to use, and who to play with, they feel a sense of control over their lives and they begin to develop self-discipline.

Children feel frustrated or discouraged. Children feel a sense of accomplishment and success when they use materials and engage in activities that are interesting and challenging, but do not require skills that they have not yet mastered. When a child misbehaves often, perhaps the classroom materials and activities do not match his or her developmental skills. For example, a child may not have the fine motor skills needed to thread beads on a string. The teacher can encourage such a child to use toys with large pieces that are easier to hold and manipulate.

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Teachers and parents need to work together to respond to challenging behaviors.

When a child repeatedly exhibits a challenging behavior over a long period of time, all the adults who care for the child need to discuss the possible causes of the problem. Perhaps a situation at home is causing the child to be upset or frustrated. Perhaps the environment at the center is causing the child's behavior—the schedule, activities, or room arrangement may not meet his or her needs. You can reassure the child's parents that there are times when some preschool children behave this way, but the behavior cannot be allowed at the center. Together, you can then agree on a plan for consistent responses to the behavior. It is very important to let the child know that he or she is still loved and cared for, even if he or she has a problem behavior. Several of the more common challenging behaviors are discussed below.

Physical aggression—hitting, scratching, kicking—must be responded to immediately. Get down to the child's level and clearly state the rule forbidding this behavior: "Alexa, I cannot let you hurt people. Use your words to say what you want." Involve the child in comforting the child who was hurt (if the hurt child permits this) so she can understand the connection between her actions and the other child's pain. "Alexa, please get the ice pack from the freezer so Neil can put it on his shin." Then help both children find something else to do. "Alexa, if you still feel upset you can do some hammering or tear paper." "Neil, are you ready to find something to do?"

When a child uses physical aggression and is out of control, you may need to hold her until she calms down. Ask a colleague to respond to the hurt child. Children feel scared when they lose control, and your firm arms can help a child feel safe because you have taken charge of the situation. It may take a few minutes, but the child will quiet down. Then you can discuss what happened: "Do you want to talk about what made you feel so angry? I could see that you were upset." Reassure the child that you want to listen to her feelings. It is best to let the child recover before discussing alternative ways to handle anger and frustration. You can do this during a quiet, one-to-one moment later in the day, or even the following day: "Yesterday, when you felt upset, you hit Neil. Next time you feel upset, what could you do instead?" This discussion can be a rehearsal so that the next time the child begins to lose control, she will have an alternative to lashing out at someone else. "That sounds like a good plan. You could do some hammering to help you feel better." Later, when the child has finished hammering, be sure to offer support: "I noticed that when you felt upset you tried some hammering to help you feel better. Do you want to talk about it?"

Biting is one of the most emotionally-charged challenging behaviors. Parents and teachers have very strong reactions to biting and may overreact, rather than trying to solve the problem. The parents of a child who has been bitten are likely to be horrified, and afraid that their child is not safe at the center. The parents of the child who did the biting may be embarrassed, ashamed, defensive, and unsure of how to respond. Teachers need to understand what may cause a child to bite and work with parents to stop this unacceptable behavior.

As with other forms of aggression, teachers should respond immediately when one child bites another. State the rule clearly, involve the child who did the biting in comforting the child who was bitten, and help both children find something else to do. In addition, you will need to talk with the child and the parents to find out what might be causing this challenging behavior. Some children have great difficult controlling their urge to bite. It may help to give the child something they are allowed to bite (for example, a clean washcloth) until they learn to control their behavior.

Temper tantrums are a child's way of expressing total frustration. The child typically loses control and screams, kicks, and cries. Temper tantrums often occur when children have many strong feelings that they can't express through words. During a tantrum, a teacher may need to protect the child, as well as other people and things in the environment, by firmly holding the child's arms and legs until the child calms down. The child will recover more quickly from the tantrum if no harm came to people or objects. Once calm is restored, you can talk about what happened and what the child could do differently in the future. It is important to let children know that you will listen to and accept their feelings.

Many tantrums can be minimized by providing an appropriate program. Children who are tired and frustrated are more likely to have tantrums than those who are well-rested, fed nutritious meals and snacks before they get too hungry, and provided with age-appropriate materials and activities. Teachers can also learn to recognize the signs that a child is getting tired and frustrated and direct the child to a soothing activity such as water or sand play or listening to soft music.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you will think of a child in your room who exhibits a challenging behavior. Describe the behavior and how you and your colleagues respond. Then discuss the situation with the child's parents and jointly develop a plan for responding to the behavior at home and at the center. Review the example below, then complete the blank form that follows.

Responding to Challenging Behaviors

(Example)

Child: *Renée* **Age:** *3 years, 3 months* **Date:** *April 16*

What behavior is challenging?

Renée hits other children.

How long has it been going on? How often does it occur?

Two or three times a week. *Two weeks.*

In what situations does it happen?

It happens when Renée wants a turn with a toy. Sometimes it happens when she's outside on the playground and wants to swing or slide but other children get in line first.

How do you respond now?

One teacher comforts the child who was hit and gets the child ice, if necessary. The other takes Renée aside and tells her she cannot hit people. Then she has to sit on the grass until we all go inside.

How does the child respond?

She cries and screams. Sometimes she pulls up the grass or sucks her thumb.

Complete the following after your discussion with the parents.

Did something happen at the center that might have upset the child?

We can't think of anything that has changed.

Did something happen at home that might have upset the child?

Renée has a new baby brother, who shares her room. She does not seem very interested in him. Renée doesn't hit at home.

What do you think might be causing the challenging behavior?

Renée may feel jealous of her new brother. We need to look at the ways we are responding now to see how we could improve. We think separating Renée from the other children is making her feel very bad about herself. We need to help her use her words to express her feelings about the new baby.

What are your plans for responding to this behavior at home and at the center?

Renée's parents will help her express her feelings about her baby brother. They will set up a special place at home that is just for Renée and will take turns spending time alone with her. They'll try to do activities that help her feel special.

At the center, we will also provide ways for Renée to talk about her brother. We will read A Baby Sister for Francis, *by Russell Hoban, at group time, then place it in the library area. We can ask the other children who have baby brothers or sisters at home to tell us what it's like.*

When Renée hits, one teacher will still comfort the hurt child. The other teacher will respond to Renée. This teacher will bend down, hold her firmly, look in her eyes and say, "It hurts people when you hit them. I won't let anyone hit you. I won't let you hit anyone." Then the teacher will try to get her involved in a calming activity, such as playing with playdough, water, or sand. We know Renée hits when she wants a turn on the swing or wants something another child has. We agreed that we will not let her have the turn or the toy if she hits.

What happened at home and at the center when you tried out your plans? Has the challenging behavior changed or gone away?

Renée's parents say that she is doing much better at home. They rearranged the kitchen to create a corner for Renée. She draws and tells them about her day while they cook dinner. Every Saturday morning, Renée goes to the park with one of her parents.

We've noticed a difference at the center, too. Renée liked the book and reads it to herself. She has started using her words more—to tell others what she wants and to tell us that her brother is a baby and she's a big girl.

Responding to Challenging Behaviors

Child: ______________________ **Age:** ________________ **Date:** ____________

What behavior is challenging?

How long has it been going on? How often does it occur?

In what situations does it happen?

How do you respond now?

How does the child respond?

Complete the following after your discussion with the parents.

Did something happen at the center that might have upset the child?

Did something happen at home that might have upset the child?

What do you think might be causing the challenging behavior?

What are your plans for responding to this behavior at home and at the center?

What happened at home and at the center when you tried out your plans? Has the challenging behavior changed or gone away?

Discuss this activity with your trainer and your colleagues. Continue using this problem-solving approach as you work with parents to respond to children's challenging behaviors.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills for guiding children's behavior.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Children's Behavior, and add to the chart specific examples of what you learned about helping children develop self-discipline while you were working on this module. Compare your ideas to those in the completed chart at the end of the module.
- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheets

Overview
(pp. 155-157)

Providing an Environment That Encourages Self-Discipline

1. **What behaviors did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards find frustrating?**
    a. *The children are constantly fighting over toys.*

    b. *The children resist cleaning up.*

2. **How will changing the environment encourage children's self-discipline?**
    a. *If there are duplicates of popular toys, children are less likely to get frustrated because they won't have to wait so long for a turn.*

    b. *If there are picture labels on the shelves and containers, children can see where things belong. They can choose what they want to use and return items after they have finished using them.*

Using Positive Methods to Guide Individual Children

1. **What did Ms. Williams know about Travis?**
    a. *Travis likes to throw things.*

    b. *Travis can help solve problems.*

    c. *Travis responds well when his behavior is redirected.*

    d. *Travis is a physically active child.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams let Travis know that she respected him?**
    a. *She walked over to him and bent down to talk to him.*

    b. *She commented on his skills by saying that he is learning to be a good thrower.*

    c. *She asked him to think of a safe place where he could throw pine cones without hurting anyone.*

Helping Children Understand and Express Their Feelings in Acceptable Ways

1. **How do you think Billy felt when Sam grabbed his piece of orange?**
   a. *Angry*

   b. *Frustrated*

2. **How did Mr. Lopez help Billy learn to express his feelings in acceptable ways?**
   a. *He told Billy that it's okay to not like it when someone takes his things.*

   b. *He stepped in immediately to prevent Billy from hitting Sam.*

   c. *He told Billy it's okay to talk to people when you're angry, but it's not okay to hit them.*

Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Children's Behavior

(p. 166)

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information To Guide Children's Behavior**
They seek adult approval and attention.	*Notice and comment on children's positive behaviors and accomplishments, such as participating in clean-up, helping a friend, or finishing a difficult puzzle. Try to spend some one-on-one time with each child every day.*
They try new things and take risks.	*Conduct regular safety checks to make sure the indoor and outdoor areas are free of hazards. Talk with children about taking risks safely. Point out the safety features in your environment, such as using cones to create a safe area at the bottom of the slide.*
They can take turns and share, but don't always want to.	*Provide duplicates of the most popular play items. Set up a system for taking turns—a sign-up sheet, name or picture cards to hang on hooks, a timer.*
They sometimes lose control; they may scream or strike out in anger at children or adults.	*Step in immediately to stop the hitting or kicking. Calmly but firmly say, "Hitting hurts. It's not okay to hit. Use your words to tell him how you feel." Stay with a child until he or she has calmed down and can listen your words. Observe children to identify signs they are about to lose control. When you see these signs, redirect the child to a soothing activity such as using playdough, tearing paper, or listening to music.*
They are gaining new physical skills and have a lot of energy.	*Offer sufficient time, materials, and space—indoors and outdoors—for children to move their bodies and practice their rapidly expanding physical skills. Change the schedule and activities when needed to allow children to take a break and expend some energy.*
They may swear or use bathroom words to get attention or without knowing what the words mean.	*Your response to this behavior will vary, depending on the reasons why children are using these words. You might calmly say, "We don't use those words here," and go on to something else. If children seem to be seeking attention, try ignoring them when they use the words. Provide the needed attention at another time.*

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Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Children's Behavior

(p. 167)

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information To Guide Children's Behavior
They want to do things for themselves, but may get upset if things don't go as expected.	*Set up the environment so children can select and replace materials without adult assistance. When problems arise, allow children time to express their feelings. When children are ready, encourage them to move on: to paint a new picture, to get a sponge to wipe up a spill, to figure out a different way to do something.*
They can follow a few simple rules.	*Involve children in setting rules and limits. Use positive reminders to help children remember what to do, rather than what not to do: "Walk indoors. You can run when we go outside." Apply the rules consistently.*
They like to feel powerful and important, and they can be bossy.	*Ask children to help you do real chores so they feel useful and competent. Create situations in which children can be leaders: choosing a book for story time, teaching another child how do something; ringing the bell to let the group know it is almost time to go outdoors. Remember, being bossy is a stage that passes when children feel sure of their abilities.*
They are learning to use words to express their feelings and to solve problems.	*Offer genuine praise when children use their words to express their feelings and solve problems. As needed, tell children the words that label their feelings: "You are sad because your Dad left." Read books in which the characters discuss and solve their disagreements.*
They are most comfortable when the daily schedule is both consistent and predictable.	*Follow the same schedule each day so children will learn the order of daily events and feel a sense of control over their own activities. When you have to alter the schedule, explain the change in advance and pay special attention to children who have difficulty coping with changes in routine.*
They are learning to recognize how their actions affect the environment, materials, and other people.	*Point out the immediate and natural consequences of actions: "You put your carpet square too close to Shane's, so he got up and moved to another spot. He likes to have more space." Respond calmly to accidents and involve children in repairs or clean-up: "Whoops! You tripped over your shoelace. Would you like some help tieing your shoes?"*

Arranging the Environment to Promote Self-Discipline

(p. 171)

Behavior	**Possible Problems**	**Suggested Solutions**
Children wander around and have difficulty choosing something to do.	*Perhaps the room is too cluttered, choices are not clear, or there aren't enough appropriate materials. The materials and activities don't interest the children, so they are bored.*	*Eliminate the clutter. Put away toys and materials children no longer use and put out some new ones. Observe what children like to do, then choose new items in response to observed interests.*
Children are easily distracted and have trouble staying with and completing tasks.	*Areas are too open, with the result that children can see everything that happens in the room.*	*Use shelves or make fabric dividers to define the areas so children are not distracted by other activities.*
Children use materials roughly and resist clean-up.	*There is no order to the display of materials. Shelves are messy. Containers are filled with pieces from different toys.*	*Organize the materials so there is a place for everything. Use picture and word labels to show where materials go.*
Children frequently ask teachers for assistance in getting out materials.	*Materials and toys are stored out of children's reach. Or, they are stored so haphazardly that children cannot find what they need.*	*Store materials on low, open shelves. Use open containers for items such as Legos® so children can easily find what they want. Label containers with pictures of the items.*
Children run around outside without using toys or equipment or participating in activities.	*The outdoor area doesn't offer a variety of activities. Children are bored because there are seldom new materials to explore.*	*Organize the outdoors into interest areas. Bring materials typically used indoors, outside. Observe children's play and provide new materials to build on their interests.*

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Glossary

Challenging behavior

Behavior such as biting or temper tantrums that occurs again and again and is often difficult to handle.

Consequence

The natural or logical result of a behavior.

Discipline

The actions that adults take to guide and direct children toward acceptable behavior.

Limits and rules

Guidelines set by teachers and children to define acceptable behavior.

Positive guidance

Techniques that help children learn to behave in acceptable ways. These methods help children develop self-discipline.

Punishment

Control of children's behavior by use of force and fear.

Self-discipline

The ability to control one's own behavior

Module 11: Families

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Overview

Working with families involves:

- Communicating frequently with parents to share information about their child's experiences and development
- Offering a variety of ways for parents to participate in their child's life at the program
- Providing support to families

Teachers and parents work as a team to encourage children's development.

Research has consistently shown that the most effective child development programs are those which actively promote and encourage parent participation. (In this module, we use the word *parent* to mean any nurturing adult who takes on the role of parent in a child's life—a mother or father, grandparent or other relative, or a close family friend.) When parents and teachers work as a team, they can share information and discuss ways to provide children with consistent care at home and in the program. Good working relationships with families enable teachers to recognize and be more responsive to children's individual characteristics and needs.

Parents are the most important people in children's lives. Children and parents are developing relationships that will continue long after the children leave your care. Enhancing the parent-child relationship is one of the key roles of an early childhood teacher. By building positive relationships with children's families, you acknowledge parents' roles as the first and primary educators of their children.

Parents can teach you a lot about their children—what they like to do, how they respond to new experiences, their strengths, and new skills they are developing. It is important for teachers to share similar information with parents on a regular basis. In this way parents can feel connected to their children's lives in the program. Parents who work in partnership with teachers become knowledgeable consumers who value the quality of care their children are receiving.

It is important to know about the cultural backgrounds of the children.

All families have a culture which defines and influences how they approach everyday experiences. A family's attitudes about play, discipline, food, and gender roles are often rooted in culture. The more teachers know about the cultural backgrounds of the children, the more effectively they can meet children's needs and communicate with parents. The communication and interaction practices accepted in your own culture may differ from those considered appropriate in another. To illustrate, in some cultures it is considered polite to answer a question as soon as it is asked. In others it is more respectful to pause and reflect on a question before giving a reply.

Teachers and parents develop partnerships in a variety of ways.

Because most parents are truly interested in their children's growth and development, sharing information is a good way to build strong lines of communication. Daily conversations with parents are opportunities to get to know each other and talk about a child's activities at home and in the program. You might describe a new skill that Donny has learned, and share a parent's excitement when she tells you how Kristi helped make breakfast or that Rigoberto talked about the trip to the clinic. It's important to let parents know that you are working to provide a quality program that meets their children's needs. This reassures them that you enjoy caring for their children.

You can encourage parents to become involved in the program by assuring them that they are always welcome to visit. When they do, offer a variety of specific ways to be involved, such as reading a story to children, helping with an activity, or simply observing for awhile. For parents who don't have time during the day, you can suggest other ways to participate. Don't be discouraged, however, if you have some parents who show no interest in becoming involved in the program. They may not yet feel comfortable with you and other staff, or they may be just barely coping with their responsibilities. It is the sense of partnership and mutual respect that is most important—not how often parents participate.

Teachers can offer support to families in need.

In addition to communicating and encouraging involvement in the program, a third aspect of working with families is providing support that enhances parent-child relationships. By sharing what you know about children, you can often help parents develop more realistic expectations and positive approaches to handling problems. Whether parents approach you or you approach them, part of your job is to relate to parents in ways that promote a sense of confidence in themselves and their children. Additionally, teachers are often among the first people to recognize when a family is under stress and having difficulty meeting basic physical and emotional needs of their children. You can help these families find the resources they need to cope with these challenges.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in working with families. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Communicating Frequently with Parents to Share Information About Their Child's Experiences and Development

Share positive and relevant information about each child's routines and activities every day.	"Thank you for telling us that Max didn't eat breakfast. He was hungry before lunch so we gave him a snack."
Respond to parents' questions and concerns.	"If you think Nicki needs more physical activity, we can encourage her to ride trikes and stretch her muscles, indoors and outside."
Suggest ways to coordinate and build on a child's home and program experiences.	"Mark loves water play. At home he could practice pouring with plastic cups and bottles in the bathtub."
Learn parents' names and something about them as a way to build trust.	"I thought of you last night, Mr. Parker, when I watched the special on Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans. That's where your family lives, isn't it?"
Tailor communication strategies to meet parents' individual needs.	"Bianca, your grandma pinned a note to your bag. Let's see what she has to say."
Hold parent-teacher conferences regularly and as needed to share information about children's progress and to plan for the future.	"Ms. Khan, here's a planning form to help you think about what you want to discuss at next week's conference."

Yesterday, for the first time, Gina Carter climbed to the top of the ladder and went down the slide by herself. Ms. Kim gave Gina a big hug when she reached the bottom. For several weeks, Ms. Kim and Gina's parents have been sharing information about Gina's progress. First, Gina watched the other children use the slide, then she climbed up the ladder holding Ms. Kim's hand. Recently she climbed up and down the ladder by herself. Ms. Kim knew that the Carters were very pleased that Gina was learning to conquer her fears. She decided to say nothing about Gina's accomplishment so they could see it for themselves. Today Gina and her mother arrive a little early. "Guess what," Mrs. Carter says. "Gina went down the slide at the park by herself." Ms. Kim smiles and says, "That's a big accomplishment. Now that Giha has learned to take a risk she is going to explore the world in different ways. We'll have to help her explore safely."

1. Why did Ms. Kim decide not to share the news about Gina's accomplishment?

2. What kinds of information will Ms. Kim and the Carters need to share, now that Gina has learned to take a risk?

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Offering a Variety of Ways for Parents to Participate in Their Child's Life at the Program

Encourage parents to visit the program at any time.	"Mr. Jackson, we're looking forward to your visit at lunch today.
Provide opportunities for parents to make decisions about their child's routines and activities in the program.	"Deena seems ready to use puzzles with more pieces. What do you think?"
Invite parents to share aspects of their culture.	"Could Young Lee bring in the photographs of your trip home? She told us about her new clothes and getting to know her grandparents."
Offer workshops and resources on topics about which parents have expressed interest.	"Many parents want to know more about helping young children cope when their parents have to travel for work, so we're planning a workshop."
Hold regularly scheduled meetings and informal family events at times that are convenient for most parents.	"Ms. Hanes, the children are having a great time jumping on the old tires you set up at last Saturday's fix-up day."
Offer a variety of parent involvement options to accommodate different schedules, interests, and skills.	"Thanks so much for typing this month's newsletter for us, Mr. Peterson."

At the mid-year orientation for new families, Mr. Bradley says to Ms. Williams, "I don't know much about young children, but I want to be a part of Jerry's life in the program." Ms. Williams asks Mr. Bradley about his work and interests, then says, "The children would enjoy learning about something you are interested in. It sounds like you enjoy cooking. That's something the children like to do, too. Your excitement would be contagious. We could plan a cooking activity together, and you could do it when you visit." Mr. Bradley thinks for a minute, then says, "If you can give me some tips on cooking with preschoolers, I'll try it. Let me check my schedule to see when I can take time off work." A few weeks later Mr. Bradley spends all morning in the program. He helps several small groups of children make "healthy bars" and talks about the nutritious ingredients they are using. All the children eat "healthy bars" for a snack. As he leaves, Mr. Bradley turns to Ms. Williams and says, "Thank you for showing me a way to be involved. This was fun, and it was great to see Jerry with his friends. I can't wait to come back again!"

1. **How did Ms. Williams help Mr. Bradley find a way to be involved?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams help Mr. Bradley prepare for his visit?**

Providing Support to Families

Maintain confidentiality about children and families.	"Thank you for sharing this information. With your permission I'll tell the director. It won't go any further."
Recognize when families are under stress and offer additional support.	"Most families find it hard to adjust when there's a new baby at home. We'll help Charisse here at the program."
Work with parents to develop strategies for dealing with a child's behavior.	"Many children go through a phase of using 'bathroom' words a lot. If we ignore them, it usually stops.
Help parents understand what their children learn through daily routines and activities.	"Jessica is building with blocks. She is learning math concepts she'll use to add and subtract."
Use familiar terms instead of jargon when talking to parents.	"When Mia plays with the pegboard and beads, she's strengthening her hand and finger muscles. She'll use those muscles when she begins to write."
Provide parents with information on child development and typical preschool behaviors.	"Like many 3-year-olds, Jody can be so involved in play that he wets his pants. As he gets older he'll learn to respond to his body's messages."
Notify a supervisor when it seems a parent needs professional help.	"Ms. Grimaldi, do you have a few minutes to talk? I've had several disturbing conversations with Mr. Lee and want to discuss them with you."

"I don't know what to do," says Ms. Thomas as she drops off three-year-old Marita. "Marita's been coming here for a month, and she still cries and clings to me when I leave. I have to work. Do you have any suggestions?" Mr. Lopez says, "Marita usually stops crying a few minutes after you leave. It takes some children a while to get used to being separated from their parents. We'll keep working with her to help her feel secure. Would you like to make an appointment to talk about how Marita spends her time here? Then you can talk to Marita about her activities. That may help her feel a stronger connection between home and the program." Ms. Thomas agrees, "You may be right. Can we talk tomorrow afternoon?" Mr. Lopez says, "Of course. Remember, we're a team, working together to support Marita." While Mr. Lopez and Marita read a book about what grown-ups do at work, Ms. Thomas leaves for work looking a lot less worried.

1. **How did Mr. Lopez help Mrs. Thomas understand Marita's behavior?**

2. **How did Mr. Lopez help Marita and her mother cope with separation?**

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Your Own Family Experiences

What is a family?

Early childhood teachers bring many firsthand experiences to their work with families. Most of us grew up in a family. Some of us are raising families of our own or have grown children. Think for a moment about what the word *family* means to you. Do you think of a mother, father; and children living together? Or, do you think of different kinds of family relationships? Our experiences influence our views on families and how parents should raise their children.

The traditional view of a family as a mother and father with several children does not always apply today. Very few families in the United States look like the traditional one of a mother who works in the home, a father who works outside the home, and their two children. Children may be growing up with a single mother or father or with step-parents. They may live with several relatives—their mother, a grandmother, an aunt and her children—or they may live with a grandparent who has legal custody. A family might include children, a parent, and his or her partner of the same or different gender.

Parenting can be a difficult job.

In addition to "looking" different, many of today's families are affected by multiple sources of stress that can make parenting a very difficult job. In affluent, "family-friendly" communities, there are parks and recreation facilities, good public transportation, and public facilities for adult education and job training. Residents in these communities have adequate housing, nutritious foods, and health care. In less affluent communities, many families make do with far less—for example, substandard housing, limited transportation, and health care systems that do not meet their needs. These factors, accompanied by violence, drug and alcohol abuse, poverty, and other sources of stress, can challenge the innate resources of even the strongest families.

It is not uncommon for teachers to blame parents for their children's problems, especially when teachers see parents who don't behave toward their children as the teachers think they should. If you have difficulty accepting the values and lifestyles of some children and families in your program, examine the source of your negative reactions. Do you expect children's families to conform to your own personal values? Are you willing to learn about different cultural practices and parenting styles? It may help to remember that most parents want the best for their children and try hard to be good parents. They too are guided by their own experiences growing up in a family.

Before you begin the learning activities in this module, spend a few minutes thinking of how your own views and experiences may affect the way you work with families. Answer the questions that follow.

Whom do you consider to be part of the family in which you grew up?

How are the families of the children in your care similar to and different from your own family?

What pressures do parents have today that your parents didn't experience?

Which pressures are the same?

How do you think your own views and experiences affect your work with families?

Discuss your responses with your trainer and a group of staff. When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. (Note: There is no glossary for this module.)

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Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to promote partnerships with families of preschool children. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Communicating Frequently with Parents to Share Information About Their Child's Experiences and Development

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Share positive and relevant information about each child's routines and activities every day.	☐	☐	☐
2. Respond to parents' questions and concerns.	☐	☐	☐
3. Suggest ways to coordinate and build on a child's home and program experiences.	☐	☐	☐
4. Learn parents' names and something about them as a way to build trust.	☐	☐	☐
5. Tailor communication strategies to meet parents' individual needs.	☐	☐	☐
6. Hold parent-teacher conferences regularly and as needed to share information about children's progress and to plan for the future.	☐	☐	☐

Offering a Variety of Ways for Parents to Participate in Their Child's Life at the Program

7. Encourage parents to visit the program at any time.	☐	☐	☐
8. Provide opportunities for parents to make decisions about their child's routines and activities in the program.	☐	☐	☐

Offering a Variety of Ways for Parents to Participate in Their Child's Life at the Program

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
9. Invite parents to share aspects of their culture.	☐	☐	☐
10. Offer workshops and resources on topics about which parents have expressed interest.	☐	☐	☐
11. Hold regularly scheduled meetings and informal family events at times that are convenient for most parents.	☐	☐	☐
12. Offer a variety of parent involvement options to accommodate different schedules, interests, and skills.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Support to Families

13. Maintain confidentiality about children and families.	☐	☐	☐
14. Recognize when families are under stress and offer additional support.	☐	☐	☐
15 Work with parents to develop strategies for dealing with a child's behavior.	☐	☐	☐
16. Help parents understand what their children learn through daily routines and activities.	☐	☐	☐
17. Use familiar terms instead of jargon when talking to parents.	☐	☐	☐

Providing Support to Families

(continued)

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
18. Provide parents with information on child development and typical preschool behaviors.	☐	☐	☐
19. Notify a supervisor when it seems a parent needs professional help.	☐	☐	☐

Learning Activities

I. Developing a Partnership with Parents

In this activity you will learn to:

- Work with parents to share information about each child
- Develop and maintain a partnership with parents

High-quality early childhood programs depend on strong partnerships between teachers and parents. Successful partnerships are based on mutual respect, trust, and the understanding that a child's development is enhanced when all the adults who care for the child work together.

Strong partnerships benefit everyone.

Strong partnerships benefit everyone involved. Parents who learn more about their children strengthen their parenting skills. Teachers who also learn more about the children feel more competent; sharing information and strategies with families allows teachers to respond to children's individual needs, interests, and strengths. Children feel more secure knowing that their parents and their teachers can keep them safe and help them learn. They feel proud of their parents' involvement.

Developing partnerships can be both challenging and time-consuming. Sometimes a child's teacher and parents have different views on child rearing. They may even have different ideas about the child's strengths, interests, and needs. Parents and teachers may not always understand each other's point of view and may disagree about how to solve a problem. What they almost always have in common, though, is genuine concern for the child's well being.

Although both the teacher and the parents know a great deal about a particular child, this knowledge and information must be combined to create a total picture. Here are some examples of the kinds of information each half of a partnership can provide.

Parents have a lot of information to share.

Parents have information about the following areas of a child's life:

Health and growth history. "The pediatrician said that Ben's allergies are under control. Thank you for working with us to coordinate his treatment."

Relationships with other family members. "Carla really enjoys being with her older cousin. They like to cook together and they can talk for hours."

Ways the child likes to be comforted. "When Yancey is tired he likes to have his back rubbed. It helps him settle down."

Food preferences and allergies. "Alfredo tried broccoli for the first time last night. He really liked it." "Donna is allergic to all kinds of berries."

How the child reacts to changes in routines. "Sonia gets very upset if I ask her to dress before breakfast. She likes to eat first, then put on her clothes."

The child's favorite activities at home. "Jake loves his bath. He wants to stay and play in the water."

The child's fears. "Lamont is afraid of clowns. We're not sure why, but he always cries when he sees one."

The family's lifestyle. "We like to get outdoors as much as possible. Peter likes to go hiking with us in the mountains."

How the child "used to be" as well as how the child is now. "When he was three, Nick liked trucks. Now that he's four, he's more interested in playing make-believe with other children."

What happened last night, over the weekend, or on vacation. "Kent woke up three times last night. I think he might be a little tired this morning." "Roxanne had a great time collecting shells at the beach."

Teachers know about a child's experiences in the program.

Teachers have information about the following areas in the child's life:

Favorite interest areas and materials. "Tanya loves the blocks. Her tall buildings are amazingly well balanced and detailed."

Which toys are too frustrating. "Tory isn't ready to do the farm puzzle yet. He chooses the ones that don't have as many pieces."

What challenges the child enjoys. "Shauna spent a lot of time today taking apart an old clock. She really wants to see what's inside."

How the child plays with others. "Jan likes to watch before she joins in with the other children."

How the child reacts to changes in the environment. "Whenever we put new props in the house corner, George is the first child to use them."

What the child talks about during the day. "Today Carlos talked a lot about going to see his grandparents. He's very excited."

What the child does when his or her parents leave. "Today I heard Jerry telling Sandy, 'Don't cry, your mom will come back soon!' I think that's his way of assuring himself that you will always come back."

What the child did today. "Marcus helped make snack today. He grated the cheese for our burritos."

Establishing the Partnership

Your relationship with a child's parents begins when their child first enters your room. Although the parents probably don't know you, you are the person who will care for their child for most of the day, five days a week. It is natural for them to want to learn as much as they can about you, the other children in the group, and how their child will spend each day. Provide a copy of the daily and weekly schedules and describe a typical day. Let the parents know something about yourself and why you enjoy working with children.

Begin to get to know the parents, too. Find out about their interests, the kind of work they do, how they feel about leaving their child in the program, and what kinds of stress they might be handling. Reassure parents that you recognize them as their child's first teacher. Describe some of the strategies you and the other parents use to share information and make decisions about children's routines and activities.

Let parents know you appreciate and will take care of their child.

At first, you and the parents will get to know each other through brief conversations at drop-off and pick-up times. Be friendly and respectful; always greet each parent by name. Share interesting, positive information about their child's day. It's not necessary to report every time their child has a fight or loses his or her temper. Let them know by your attitude and tone of voice that their child is appreciated and well-cared for. "Susanna played with Carrie in the sand box, she painted, and she sat in my lap at story time." These ongoing communications build trust and acceptance, which will lead to a stronger partnership.

If parents don't respond to your efforts to establish a partnership, try to understand their feelings about leaving their child in the program. Often parents are concerned about not spending as much time as they would like with their children. It is helpful to consider your feelings toward the parents and how you may be conveying these feelings through your tone of voice, facial expressions, or the kinds of information you share. Be careful not to make assumptions about parents or judge them because their lifestyle differs from yours.

Respond to parents' concerns or questions.

Parents frequently raise concerns about their children. ("Why can't Sam zip his coat like the other children do?") or ask questions about the program ("What will you be doing on the field trip?"). If possible, respond immediately by providing the needed information. If it will take more time to discuss the issue, schedule a meeting at a time that is convenient for the parents. Sometimes parents offer their own suggestions about how to care for their child. Their ideas may differ from what you would do. Unless you think the suggested strategy will hurt the child, follow up on the parent's suggestions. "We'll be sure to let Jedi slice her sandwich in four pieces if you think she likes it better that way."

Maintaining a Strong Relationship

Once a trusting relationship has been established, it is important to continue to communicate regularly with parents and involve them in their children's experiences in the program. A partnership is strengthened when parents and teachers can see how the child benefits from their teamwork. "Janine doesn't cry any more when you leave. When she feels sad, she looks at the family photo album you made for her that she keeps in her cubby."

Try these suggestions.

Some suggestions for maintaining strong partnerships follow.

Help parents focus on their child's special characteristics instead of comparing a child to others the same age. "Kwame always has a smile ready. He makes us all feel happier."

Help children and parents feel good about belonging to the same family. "Mr. Bent, Eli gets excited when he knows you're coming for lunch. He really likes it when the other kids talk about your visits."

Wait until asked before offering advice. When you are asked, make sure you are clear about what is fact and what is opinion. "Child development experts say that most preschoolers aren't really ready for formal academic lessons."

Acknowledge events and transitions in the families' lives. "Congratulations on your promotion. Your husband told me the whole family had a party to celebrate."

Help children and parents cope when one parent is away. Suggest sending art work, letters, tapes, or stories to the parent who is away. Remind children that their parents love them even when they are gone.

Keep in touch when a child is absent or ill. "Hello, Ms. Hon, I'm calling to see how Sooki is feeling today."

Maintain confidentiality when parents share something private with you. "I'm glad you told me about this. It will help me work with Luis, and I assure you I won't share it with anyone."

Although you do many things for children that parents also do (such as providing guidance or serving lunch), your role as a teacher is not the same as that of the parents. Always remember that parents need your support, but they don't need you to take over their role.

Applying Your Knowledge

[illegible]

Parent-Teacher Daily Communication Record

(Example)

Child/age: *Donna, 3-1/2 years* **Length of enrollment:** *4 months*

Parents: *Karen Parker and Frank Anderson*

Date: *June 6*

A.M. *Greeted Ms. Parker and reminded her I was starting this activity. She told me Donna is excited about playing dress-up.*

P.M. *Mr. Anderson came to pick up Donna. I told him that Donna played dress-up with Sheila. They put on lots of jewelry. He said she likes to wear her grandma's jewelry. His wife had told him about the activity.*

Date: *June 7*

A.M. *Mr. Anderson brought Donna. I told him about our plans to bring the water play table outside and that Donna likes using the turkey baster to fill up cups and bottles. He asked if she could do that at home. I told him she could do it at the sink, in a dishpan, or in the bathtub. He seemed pleased with my ideas.*

P.M. *Ms. Parker picked up Donna. I told her that Donna carried out the water play toys and made fruit smoothies. She was surprised because Donna doesn't eat much fruit at home. I said that some children eat more when they help make it. She told me Donna would be late on Friday because she has her first dentist appointment. I asked if Donna seemed worried about going to the dentist. She said, "Yes, a little. She doesn't know what to expect." I said she could borrow our book, Going to the Dentist. She and Donna can read and discuss the book so Donna will have some idea of what to expect. Ms. Parker thanked me.*

Weekly Summary

(Example)

Information you shared:

Donna played dress-up with Sheila and likes to use the baster during water play.

Suggested ways Donna could play with a turkey baster at home.

Donna carried the water play toys and likes to make and eat fruit smoothies,

Information parents shared:

Donna likes dressing up and wearing her grandma's jewelry. She doesn't eat much fruit at home. Donna is going to the dentist and she's a little scared.

How has the partnership helped you meet this child's needs?

I know more about what Donna likes to do. I can suggest things for her parents to do with her at home. I suggested a book to help Donna learn about going to the dentist.

Parent-Teacher Daily Communication Record*

Child/age: ____________ **Length of enrollment:** ____________

Parents: ____________

Date: ____________

A.M.

P.M.

Date: ____________

A.M.

P.M.

* Copy the first three pages of this form so you will have room to record your communications during the two-week period.

Date: ____________________
A.M.

P.M.

Date: ____________________
A.M.

P.M.

Date: ____________________
A.M.

P.M.

Weekly Summary

(Complete one at the end of each week.)

Information you shared:

Information parents shared:

After two weeks, review all your notes and answer the following question.

How has the partnership helped you meet this child's needs?

Discuss this activity with the parents who were the focus of this activity and your trainer.

II. Keeping Parents Informed About the Program

In this activity you will learn to:

- Keep parents informed about the program
- Improve parent-program communication

Parents feel more involved when they know what's happening.

One of your most important responsibilities is to work with your supervisor and other staff to keep parents up to date on activities in the program. Parents feel more involved when they know what's happening. Most parents would appreciate knowing, for example, that there's a new climber on the playground, several staff are attending a training course, the children will be making pumpkin muffins for snack, one of the teachers will be on vacation next week, and this month's parent workshop is on encouraging creativity. Some of this information can be passed from teachers to parents during the times when children are picked up or dropped off. These times, however, are usually too brief to ensure that everyone is informed about everything that goes on in the program. Teachers need to use a variety of ongoing communication techniques to keep all parents informed about the program's current activities and future plans.

Program newsletters can keep families informed.

One of the most common ways to keep parents informed is through a newsletter. General information of interest to all families can be included, as well as specific news about each classroom. Generally, one staff member serves as editor; however, all staff contribute news. Parents might contribute to the newsletter by gathering information, writing articles, or producing an issue on a home or program computer. In addition to news and information about coming events, the newsletter might include the month's menus, suggested activities for parents and children to do at home, information on community events of interest to families, reviews of children's books, and books on parenting and related topics. The newsletter can include space for parents to make suggestions for future issues or provide news, information, or a favorite recipe.

Room newsletters can offer more detailed information about children's activities.

Another kind of newsletter covers the activities and news of one room. A parent may volunteer to help produce such a newsletter, or the teachers can take the lead. This type of newsletter can include the same kinds of information discussed in the previous paragraph, and it can be more personal, providing details about what takes place in the room: "When the children made muffin pizzas for snack they invented some unusual topping combinations." If you mention children by name, be sure to include something positive about each child.

Try these suggestions.

Here are some other ways to keep parents informed about your program.

Establish a message program where each family has a box, folder, or pocket (shoe bags work well for this). Use the message program to provide parents with general news as well as specific information about their child.

Provide individual family journals that stay at the program and can be used by parents and teachers to share information about the child. Notices or flyers can be tucked in the journal so parents will see them.

Create a parent bulletin board in the lobby or some other area through which all parents pass. Post articles, a calendar of events, reminders of upcoming meetings, the week's menus, and other items of general interest.

Develop and maintain a parent handbook that presents the program's policies and procedures and lists opportunities for parent involvement. Organize the handbook by topic (calendar, holidays) or alphabetically. Give a copy to each family and provide updates whenever necessary.

Create a family photo board to help parents learn more about other children and families. Invite each family to provide a recent photograph and complete a brief questionnaire about their favorite foods, sports, recreation activities, hobbies, and places to visit. When new families enroll, add their photos and descriptions to the board.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity, you answer some questions about one communication technique that your program uses to keep parents informed. First review the completed example that follows. Then select a communication technique, suggest ways to improve it, implement your suggestions, and report on the results.

Communicating with Parents

(Example)

Communication technique: *Classroom newsletter*

What information is included?

Upcoming field trips, birthdays, something about each child, new toys or other materials, trips, and activities parents and children can do at home.

How often is the information shared or updated?

Bi-weekly.

What is the role of the program director?

She reads it and includes some of the information in the program newsletter before I make copies.

What is the role of teachers?

We take turns writing, proofing, and making copies.

What is the role of parents?

They read it.

How could this communication technique be improved?

We could ask parents to help produce the newsletter. They could provide information or articles to include. We could send home a questionnaire asking parents for suggestions and for help preparing the newsletter.

Implement your suggestions for improving the communication technique, then describe the results.

The parents provided lots of suggestions through their completed questionnaires. Two parents offered to help and worked on the latest issue. We used some parent-written articles, including one about a new park that one of the families visited last month. Several parents mentioned that they really liked this issue.

Communicating with Parents

Communication technique: ______________________________

What information is included?

How often is the information shared or updated?

What is the role of the program director?

What is the role of teachers?

What is the role of parents?

How could this communication technique be improved?

Implement your suggestions for improving this communication technique; then describe the results.

Discuss this activity with your trainer and colleagues.

III. Providing Ways for Parents to Be Involved

In this activity you will learn to:

- Provide a variety of parent involvement opportunities, tailored to meet family needs
- Plan and implement a parent involvement strategy

Create a variety of parent involvement options.

Most parents want to be involved in their child's life in the program but may not know how they can contribute. Some parents can arrange their work schedules so they can eat lunch with the children once a month, go on field trips, or volunteer in the classroom on a regular basis. However, many parents are not able to participate in this way. It's important to offer a variety of parent involvement options that match parents' interests, skills, and schedules. When parents first register their children, ask them to complete a brief questionnaire about how they would like to be involved in your program.

Make it a point to let parents know how much you value their participation and how it benefits the program. Parents who come along on field trips may enjoy themselves so much that they need little or no encouragement to offer to do it again. The parent who sews new curtains for the children's puppet theater, however, may never see the theater in action. In such a case, be sure to send a thank-you note home. Describe how the children are using the theater and enclose a photograph of the theater in action. Similarly, the parent who produces the newsletter should be credited in every issue.

Try these suggestions.

Here are some suggestions for helping parents become more involved in your program.

Hold a new parents' orientation several times a year. Because you are likely to have new families enrolling in your program during the year, you may need to provide more than one orientation.

Keep a job jar in your room. On index cards, list program-related jobs you never get around to doing that a parent could do at home. Parents can select a job from the jar, then see you for additional instructions. Jobs could include repairing broken toys, making name tags for future field trips, shopping at yard sales for dramatic play props such as cooking utensils, or making lotto boards or other materials for the room.

Organize a family dinner. Plan the event so that parents can come and have dinner on their way home. Dinner might be a meal planned and prepared by the children, or something simple such as pizza.

Involve parents in building or landscaping projects. Interested parents can work on these types of projects at their own convenience over time. When a project is completed, hold a celebration party.

Hold a family movie night. Parent volunteers can plan and host the event. They might, for example, sell popcorn and juice to raise funds for extra materials or field trips.

Schedule an evening or weekend "fix-it" session. At this session, families can work together to spruce up the program, paint walls, make a tire playground, or prepare a plot of ground for a garden.

Open the program for an evening or a weekend afternoon. Children can come to their room as though it were a regular day. Parents come too and play with the children, lead activities, serve snacks, or sit back and observe their child playing with others. Set this up so small groups of parents take turns being with the children while the rest of the parents are involved in another activity.

Set up a parent corner. Include books, magazines, brochures, and other resources of interest to parents. If possible, provide comfortable chairs and refreshments.

Ask a parent to organize a photo album about the class. You can provide the pictures and the book; the parent can put it together. Display the photo album prominently and include a cover page thanking the parent.

Invite parents to be book reviewers. Parents could read children's books or books on child development or parenting. Provide a book review form, listing the title, author, publisher, price, and comments. For children's books, leave space on the form for parents to record what ages the book is appropriate for, what the book is about, and why they and their child liked it. Use these recommendations to select books for your room.

Send home a wish list of materials for the classroom. A list of needed resources should be updated regularly. Parents might make contributions themselves, or they could put you in touch with businesses, community groups, or individuals who could make contributions.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you try out a parent involvement strategy. Select from those mentioned earlier or make up one of your own. Discuss the strategy with your supervisor and other teachers in your room. If your supervisor or colleagues think this strategy is not appropriate for the parents at your program, then select another one. First read the example, then complete the chart that follows to describe the strategy you chose and how it encouraged parent involvement.

Parent Involvement Strategy
(Example)

Strategy:

Invite parents to help us make new story tapes of some favorite books.

Plans:

I will send a notice home with the children asking for volunteers. The program will supply blank tapes and zipper bags to hold each book and tape. We can provide the books or parents can read favorites from the library. I'll try to make sure we tape a variety of books. I'll explain that the tapes will be used in the quiet corner, where children like to go to be alone for a while.

Results:

Four parents volunteered to make tapes. Each parent made four tapes so now we have a good supply for the quiet corner. The children really enjoy hearing their parent's voices on tape. All four parents said they would be happy to make more tapes whenever we need them.

Follow-up:

I will make this an ongoing parent involvement project. I asked Ms. Porter, one of the four parents who made tapes, to help me keep track of which books we tape and which parents help. I think the children would like it if all the parents took a turn making story tapes. This could be a good project for parents who find it difficult to participate in the program.

Parent Involvement Strategy

Strategy:

Plans:

Results:

Follow-up:

Discuss this activity with your trainer and the other teachers in your room.

IV. Planning and Participating in Parent-Teacher Conferences

In this activity you will learn to:

- Prepare for a conference by reviewing information about the child's skills, needs, interests, and progress
- Participate in a parent conference

Parent-teacher conferences are opportunities for in-depth discussions.

At least twice a year, and whenever a need arises, parents and teachers need to meet to review how each child is progressing in all areas of development and to set goals for continued growth and learning. Parent-teacher conferences are opportunities to focus on one child and family without any distractions or interruptions. Although much information about the child is shared daily, conferences allow for in-depth discussions. They should be carefully planned and handled.

Planning for Conferences

At enrollment, explain to parents how often conferences take place, their purpose, and what is discussed. When it's time to schedule a conference, ask parents what time would be most convenient for them to attend. Offer several options and provide adequate advance notice so parents can make plans. Allow enough time for the conference so you and the parents won't feel rushed. Remind parents that the conference is an opportunity for you to learn more about the child's life at home so you can better support the child's development at the program.

Parents often have their own goals for the conference. Most importantly, they want to know you understand and like their child. In addition, they may have a specific concern they would like to discuss or a suggestion for how they would like you to work with their child. It's also possible that a parent might have a concern about the program's philosophy and curriculum or a complaint about something you did or didn't do. It's helpful to know about these issues ahead of time so you can be prepared.

Encourage parents to prepare for the conference.

To help parents prepare for the conference, you can provide a planning form asking what questions they want to address and inviting them to list the topics they want to cover. Ask parents to bring some photographs, observation notes, art work, and other items that demonstrate the child's experiences and accomplishments away from the program. These can be added to the child's portfolio—an organized collection of information about the child's interests, needs, development, and progress. (Work samples and portfolios are discussed in Module 12, Program Management.) Provide a copy of the goals and strategies agreed on at the previous conference (if there has been one).

Use portfolios to provide information about all areas of development.

To make best use of the time set aside for the conference, it's important to be well prepared. The teacher who will take the lead in the conference—usually the person with primary responsibility for the child—should examine the contents of the child's portfolio prior to the conference. This may include reviewing observation notes, anecdotal records, checklists, work samples, photographs, and any other written materials that provide objective information about the child's activities and progress. It is important to organize the portfolio items to make sure they address all areas of development: physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional. If there are concerns about a child's health (such as evidence the child might need glasses) these concerns should be written down and supported with examples from observations. All adults who work with the child can provide information.

Many parents are interested in learning how their child gets along in a group setting with peers. They want to know as much as possible about their child's daily experiences in the program. For example: "What activities and interest areas does Nigel enjoy? Who does he play with? What makes him happy and sad?" Make sure your notes include examples that will help parents picture what their child does in the program and understand how these experiences support development.

Sometimes teachers feel a little uneasy before a conference. It may help to role play with your supervisor or a colleague. You can practice sharing your observations and answering the kinds of questions the parents are likely to ask.

Participating in the Conference

At the beginning of the conference, try to establish a relaxed and comfortable tone. Anticipate at least five minutes of social conversation before the more serious discussions begin. Start by explaining how the conference will proceed: "I'm so glad you could both come today. Let me tell you how we will proceed. We'll describe a typical day in the program for Karen. I'll use Karen's portfolio to give you information on her activities and progress in the program. Next, you can tell us what you've seen at home. . . ." This is a good time to stress that the conference is a time for sharing information and planning for the future. It is not in any way an evaluation of their child's performance.

During the conference, make sure there are many opportunities for parents to provide input and ask questions. Here are some other suggestions for conducting successful conferences.

Begin and end the conference with a positive statement. Focus on your relationship with the child. "We really enjoy watching A. J. take on challenges. He's always ready to try something new."

Respect cultural preferences related to communication practices. Maintain an appropriate physical distance, eye contact, and tone of voice; respect response times to questions; use or avoid physical contact, as appropriate.

Ask parents open-ended questions. This is especially helpful if they seem uncertain or reluctant to talk about their concerns. "What else about Rebecca or her activities in the program would you like to discuss?"

Invite parents to work with you by asking questions and seeking their advice. Stress the importance of consistency between home and the program. "It's helpful to know that sometimes you have to repeat directions to be sure Mai Le understands what to do. We'll remember to do that here as well."

Take notes during the conference. This is very important if you are discussing a complex or difficult situation. Explain to parents that the notes will help you follow up on their concerns.

Pay attention to body language. Note especially signs that a parent might feel tense, hurt, disappointed, or angry.

Listen carefully to parents' comments without interrupting or rushing them. Accept their feelings even if they are different from your own. Restate their comments and suggestions to make sure you heard them correctly. "You are concerned about Reneé being tired when she gets home so you would like us to make sure she naps every day."

Respond thoughtfully when parents ask you for advice about handling a specific situation. Always offer more than one suggestion; if you don't know the answer, say you will look into it and get back in touch. Most importantly, encourage parents to think about what would be best for their child. "Some parents find it helpful to allow their child to select what clothes to wear. Others offer a choice between two items, for example, the red sweater or the blue one."

Set new developmental goals and develop strategies for home and program.

After reviewing all areas of the child's development, the next step is to set some goals and develop strategies to encourage the child's development in the program as well as at home. These goals and strategies will serve as the framework for discussions at the next conference.

At the end of the conference, summarize your discussions and restate the actions you each have agreed to take and how you will follow up. "I will spend more time looking at books with Laura now that I know she likes to do that at home. And you'll bring in her special blanket, so she can have it during naps. That will make her feel more secure." Also, complete a conference evaluation form and record the new goals and strategies in the child's portfolio.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you plan, conduct, and evaluate a conference with the parents of one of the children in your room. Begin by reviewing the information you and your colleagues collect about the child's activities, development, and progress. Complete the three planning forms: Conference Planning Summary, Developmental Summary, and Suggested Developmental Goals and Strategies. Hold the conference, then answer the questions on the Conference Evaluation form.

Conference Planning Summary

Child/age: ______________________ **Parent(s):** ______________________________

Date of conference: ______________ **Date of last conference:** ________________

Which interest areas, materials, and activities does this child enjoy most?

What feelings does this child express (e.g., happy, sad, angry, frustrated)?

How does this child participate in routines?

With whom does this child play, and in what ways?

Anecdotes to share:

Concerns (if any):

Complete the developmental summary that follows.

Developmental Summary

Use this form to summarize the child's progress. For each area of development, list the goals set at the last conference (if there has been one) and describe the child's specific skills—for example, cuts with scissors, builds tall towers, usually plays with two or three others.

Goals	Skills
Physical (using large and small muscles)	
Cognitive (thinking and problem solving)	
Socio-Emotional (relating positively to others and developing self-confidence)	
Language (listening, speaking, understanding, and exploring reading and writing)	

List [illegible]

Suggested Developmental Goals and Strategies

Developmental Goals	Strategies
Physical (use of large and small muscles)	
Cognitive (thinking and problem solving)	
Socio-Emotional (relating positively to others and developing self-confidence)	
Language (listening, speaking, understanding, and exploring reading and writing)	

Conference Evaluation

Think about what happened at the conference and answer these questions.

How did you establish a relaxed tone?

How did you start the discussion?

What information did you share to create a "picture" of the child's day?

How did you encourage parent input?

How did you show respect for the parents' communication style?

Were you asked for advice? If so, how did you respond?

How did you summarize the conference?

How did you end the conference?

What would you do differently next time?

Discuss this learning activity with your trainer and other teachers who work with the child and parents.

V. Reaching Out to Families

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize signs that families are under stress
- Provide support to families to prevent or respond to stress

Teachers can lend a helping hand to families.

Many parents of preschoolers—especially first-time parents—are coping with stressful lives. Balancing the demands of a job and family, feeling unsure about sharing the care of their child, and not understanding changes in their child's behavior can leave parents feeling overwhelmed. Early childhood teachers are in an excellent position to lend a helping hand. Some parents will feel comfortable sharing their worries and seeking assistance; others will not. Regardless of whether parents approach you or you approach them, remember that helping them find their own solutions enhances their sense of competence.

Recognizing When Parents Are Under Stress[1]

Stress is a normal part of daily life for many families. Most parents can cope with typical frustrations and tension, so stress doesn't interfere with their work and home activities. Some families, however, are affected over a long period of time by significant sources of stress such as community violence, homelessness, substance abuse, or lack of basic necessities. The stresses are not caused by single events such as divorce or a car accident. Rather, they are routine, unrelenting, and woven into daily life. They are a result of societal conditions and pressures that are beyond the control of individual families.

The following are examples of sources of long-term significant stress that might be experienced by the children and families in your program. There may be other sources that are specific to your community.

- Unemployment.
- Lack of necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care.
- Lack of transportation to work, job training, or a health provider.
- Exposure to violence in the home or in the community.
- Living in a shelter or other temporary housing.
- Living in overcrowded or inadequate housing.
- Chronic illness or disability of a child or other family member, along with lack of access to needed services and support.
- Substance abuse in the household or in the community at large.

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[1] Adapted with permission from Derry G. Koralek, *Responding to Children Under Stress* (Washington, DC: Head Start Bureau, 1993), pp. 40-42.

- Abuse and neglect of a child, spouse, or other family member.
- Depression or other mental illness of a child or adult family member.
- Learning a new language and adapting to a new culture.

High levels of stress can overwhelm families.

Regardless of the cause of high stress in their lives, families tend to have similar concerns, needs, and behaviors. Although some families have the skills and strength needed to cope with the stress, many are overwhelmed. They may experience effects such as the following:

Family life is unpredictable, unstable, and chaotic. If the family moves frequently, children must adapt to new child care programs, teachers, and classmates. Children may have difficulty focusing and lack a sense of order and discipline in their lives.

Adult family members are unable to give their children affection and attention. They may expect children to assume adult responsibilities such as caring for younger siblings.

Children and adult family members have unmet health and nutrition needs. The family may have no access to needed health care, including immunizations, dental checkups, and counseling.

Children receive inconsistent, overly punitive, or nonexistent parental discipline.

Recognize and respond to signs of stress.

When a family is under stress, the parents may seem disorganized, frequently forgetting things such as mittens on a cold day or a child's special blanket. A parent might seem frustrated when a child is slow to get ready to go home. A parent might complain to a teacher about the difficulty of handling the child's growing independence. Parents under stress might be unwilling to accept help, or they might be more interested in talking about their own problems than their child's.

When you see signs of stress, it is important not to add to them. This is not the time to discuss the child's inappropriate behavior or changes in the program's vacation schedule. However, it would be appropriate to share information about their child that will help parents get through the evening. For example, you would let a parent know their child has been tired and cranky all afternoon so you can discuss whether the child might be coming down with the flu. When parents know the reasons for their child's behavior, they are less likely to be frustrated or angered by the crankiness and more likely to comfort the child. When parents feel less stress, they are more likely to interact positively with their children and less likely to lose control.

Always notify your supervisor when you think parents may need professional help. Do not counsel parents or refer them to social services or mental health professionals without first discussing the situation with your supervisor. Your job is to help parents get the support they need, not to provide it yourself.

When parents do confide in you, it's essential to maintain complete confidentiality. This means you should not discuss a child with anyone other than your colleagues or the child's parents. This holds true for information about families as well. In addition, you should not share records with anyone who does not have a "need to know," nor should you hold discussions about children or families during times when other children are present. Ask your supervisor about your program's guidelines for maintaining confidentiality.

Helping Parents Locate Resources

Parents often need to know where they can get help for themselves, their child, or the family. Your director can provide you with information about parent education opportunities. Here are some things you can do to help.

- Encourage parents to connect with one another by introducing them to families that live in their neighborhood or have children of the same age. "Mr. Larsen, I'd like you to meet Mr. Wheeler. He and his wife have a son about the same age as your daughter."
- Develop an exchange list so parents can support one another through sharing responsibilities and errands such as carpooling, grocery shopping, and meal preparation. "Several families want to start a dinner club. Once a week each family would cook enough for all the other members."
- Call parents' attention to resources, articles, workshops, and television or radio shows on children and families. "Next Tuesday at 8 P.M., there's a show on Channel 8 about stepparenting and blended families."
- Display books on topics of interest to parents—playground safety, juggling home and work responsibilities, quick and healthy meals—and invite parents to borrow these resources.
- Tell parents about services and special programs provided by community groups. Provide as much information as possible—names, phone numbers, locations, and hours of operation.

Providing Information on Child Growth and Development

Parents sometimes do not know much about the typical development of young children. As a result, they may expect too much or too little of their children. Here are some things you can do to help.

- Invite a parent to join you in observing a child. Review and discuss the observation recordings and explain why the child's actions are typical of this stage of development.
- Provide information about parenting workshops on topics such as supporting emerging literacy, adjusting to a new baby, responding to children's growing independence, and other subjects that would be of interest to parents of preschoolers.

- Include information on child development in newsletters and on the parent bulletin board.
- Invite parents to attend staff workshops.
- Establish a parent lending library of books, magazines, and videotapes about child growth and development.
- Introduce parents who are dealing with, or have already successfully handled, similar developmental issues.

Model appropriate ways to interact with children.

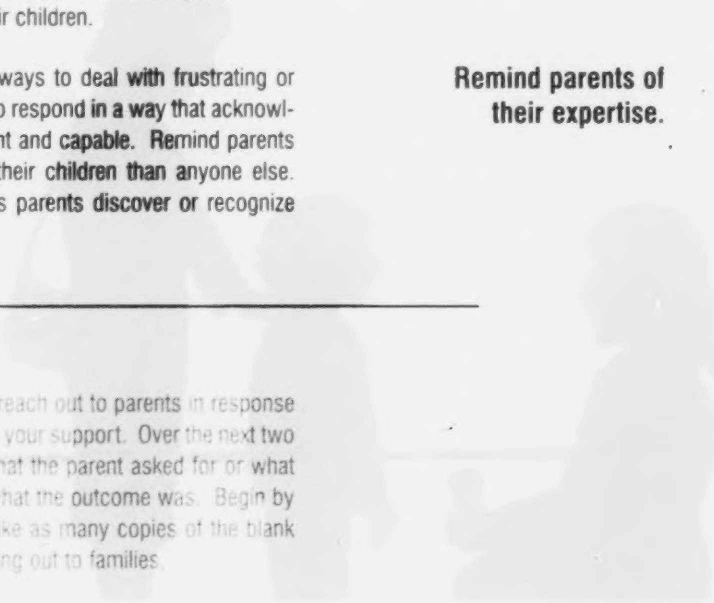
One of the most effective ways to provide information about child development is during drop-off and pick-up times and in longer visits during the day. Without any extra effort or planning, you can model for parents appropriate ways to interact with children. In the following example, parents witness the following exchanges between a teacher and the children in her care:

> *Ms. Danforth encourages Ashleigh to help put away the blocks. She talks and laughs with Evan as she ties his shoes. And she asks Bart a question about his painting—"Tell me, how did you make these long, squiggly lines?"*
>
> *The children's parents comment: "I can't get Ashleigh to put any of her things away at home." "Evan squirms around so much at home that I just want to get his shoes tied as quickly as possible." "All of Bart's paintings look the same to me."*
>
> *Ms. Danforth uses these comments to begin conversations about:*
>
> - *promoting children's self-help skills,*
> - *using routines as times to talk with children, and*
> - *supporting creativity by asking children about their painting techniques.*

When you demonstrate positive ways to talk to and support children, you do a lot to help parents improve their interactions with their children.

Remind parents of their expertise.

Often parents turn to teachers for advice about ways to deal with frustrating or confusing behavior. When this happens, be sure to respond in a way that acknowledges parents' skills and helps them feel confident and capable. Remind parents that they are "experts" who know more about their children than anyone else. Asking what approaches they use at home helps parents discover or recognize what works for them and their child.



Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity, you will focus on times when you reach out to parents in response to their requests or because you noticed they need your support. Over the next two weeks, keep a journal describing the problem, what the parent asked for or what you saw was needed, how you responded, and what the outcome was. Begin by reading the example on the next page. Then, make as many copies of the blank form as needed to record your experiences reaching out to families.

Reaching Out to Families
(Example)

Child/age: *Larry, 4 years, 3 months* **Parents:** *Betty and Dan Ingraham* **Date:** *October 23*

Problem:

Last month a fire caused extensive damage to Larry's house. The family had to escape from the burning house in the middle of the night. Since the fire, Larry has been fearful and unable to fall asleep at night. The family is living in an apartment until their house is repaired.

What parents asked for or what I saw was needed:

Strategies for helping Larry cope with his fears and get to sleep.

My response:

We talked about the problem and I reassured them that Larry's behavior is typical of a young child who has had a scary experience. Mr. Ingraham said that before the fire Larry was more independent and almost fearless. Again, I tried to reassure them by stating that it can take a long time for young children to completely recover from a stressful event. I suggested taking Larry to visit the house to show him that the fire was out and to see how the repairs will make the house safe again. Another suggestion I made was to talk to Larry about his fears. This would confirm that his feelings about the fire are important and recognized. It can also reassure Larry that he is safe now. I mentioned some of the strategies we use to help children relax so they can fall asleep at nap time. I said that we would be sure to have plenty of firefighting props so Larry could use dramatic play to express and handle his feelings.

The outcome:

A week late Ms. Ingraham told me that the relaxation strategies were working—Larry is now finding it easier to fall asleep. He talks about the fire and how scary it was before he goes to sleep each night. Ms. Ingraham says either she or her husband stay with Larry until he falls asleep and he always seems to sleep better after they talk. She also said that visiting the house helped Larry understand that the house was no longer on fire. He was excited to see his room, repainted and almost ready to return. I told her Larry had been engaged in a lot of firefighter play. After putting out fires he says, "The fire is out. The family can come home now."

*Reaching Out to Families**

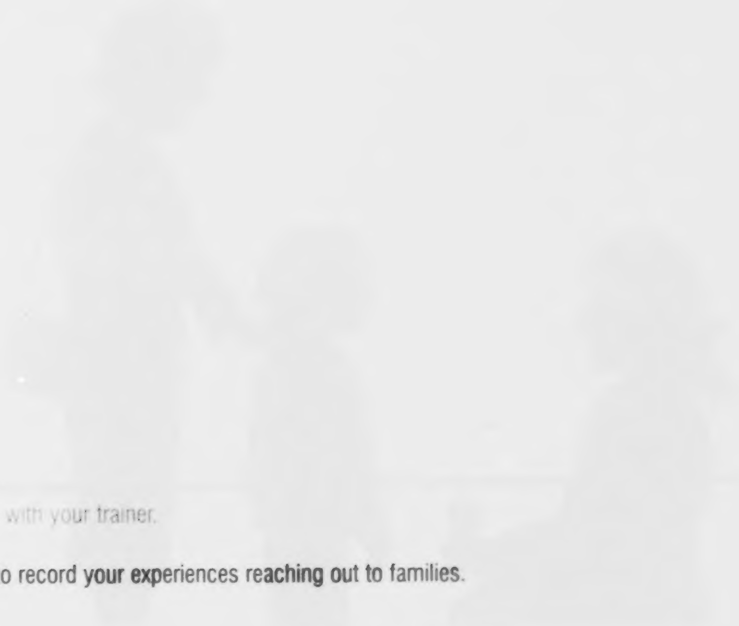
Child/age: ____________________ **Parents:** _______________ **Date:** _________________

Problem:

What parents asked for or what I saw was needed:

My response:

The outcome:



Discuss your experiences reaching out to families with your trainer.

*Make as many copies of this form as you need to record your experiences reaching out to families.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new skills in working with families. Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

Review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheet

Overview

(pp. 211-213)

Communicating Frequently with Parents to Share Information About Their Child's Experiences and Development

1. **Why did Ms. Kim decide not to share the news about Gina's accomplishment?**
   a. *She wanted Gina's parents to be there when their daughter first went down the slide alone.*

   b. *Ms. Kim knew Gina would go to the park with her parents and they would enjoy the surprise.*

2. **What kinds of information will Ms. Kim and the Carters need to share now that Gina has learned to take a risk?**
   a. *Other challenges Gina is trying to master*

   b. *Ways to help Gina learn to take safe risks*

Offering a Variety of Ways for Parents to Participate in Their Child's Life at the Program

1. **How did Ms. Williams help Mr. Bradley find a way to be involved?**
   a. *She asked him about his work and interests.*

   b. *She told him she could tell that he enjoyed cooking.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams help Mr. Bradley prepare for his visit?**
   a. *She told him that the children liked cooking activities.*

   b. *She helped him plan a cooking activity for preschoolers.*

Providing Support to Families

1. **How did Mr. Lopez help Mrs. Thomas understand Marita's behavior?**
   a. *He told her that Marita usually stops crying a few minutes after she leaves.*

   b. *He explained that Marita was getting used to being separated from her parents.*

2. **How did Mr. Lopez help Marita and her mother cope with separation?**
   a. *He scheduled a meeting with Mrs. Thomas to tell her more about separation and what Marita does in the program.*

   b. *He read a book to Marita about what parents do at work.*

Module 12:

Program Management

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Overview

Program management involves:

- Learning about each child's culture, language, family, skills, needs, and interests
- Working as a team to offer an individualized program
- Following administrative policies and procedures

Teachers plan, conduct, and evaluate the program.

As an early childhood teacher, you play many roles. Your most important role is to provide for children's health and safety, and encourage their development. But as you know, working with young children involves much more. You help children feel competent and self-confident. You support families and help parents balance their work and home responsibilities. And, you and your colleagues use management skills to ensure the smooth operation of your program.

Many teachers do not see themselves as managers. Most likely your program has a director who performs a variety of management tasks. The director prepares budgets, makes hiring decisions, develops schedules, supervises staff, and provides training. Yet you and your colleagues are also managers. You work as a team to plan, conduct, and evaluate the program. Performing these managerial tasks allows you to create a supportive learning environment, guide children's learning, and handle other responsibilities.

Teachers use information about each child to plan an appropriate program.

Effective early childhood programs are both developmentally and individually appropriate. They are based on the child development theories, principles, and milestones that describe, in general, how most young children develop. In addition, they are tailored to respond to the characteristics of each child. Identifying each child's skills, needs, and interests and planning a program that responds to these characteristics is called individualizing.

Individualizing is an important part of program management. In some programs, teachers begin getting to know each child by conducting health and developmental screenings at enrollment. Teachers use information collected through these screenings to plan for each child. In addition, screening results may identify signs of possible developmental problems. In these instances, teachers meet with parents and specialists to discuss the screening results and determine whether the child needs a health or developmental assessment to pinpoint areas of strength and need. Information gained through these assessments helps parents, teachers, and specialists plan ways to address the child's needs in the classroom and through other interventions.

To keep track of and respond to each child's changing skills, interests, and needs, many teachers have a system for ongoing assessment. An assessment system might include strategies such as: observing and recording children's behavior, using standardized instruments and checklists, saving samples of children's work, and discussing children's progress with parents and team members. Teachers can use individual portfolios to organize and maintain the information collected through ongoing assessment.

Individualizing is most successful when programs use a team approach. Parents and teachers regularly share information about each child and work together to offer a program that builds on the child's interests, offers appropriate challenges, and reflects the child's family, language, and culture. For example, when Peter's father tells Ms. Thomas how much the family enjoyed a weekend kite festival, she decides to add books on kites to the library area and plan a kite-making activity.

The program's administrative policies and procedures ensure smooth operations.

Early childhood programs need policies and procedures that tell everyone—parents, children, staff, and volunteers—how the program normally operates. For example, program policies might describe the procedures for completing time sheets and required reports. Upholding policies, following procedures, and maintaining appropriate records help to keep the program running smoothly. These activities are part of your management role.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate their competence in program management. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.

Learning About Each Child's Culture, Language, Family, Skills, Needs, and Interests

Communicate with parents often to learn about a child's family life, culture, home language, and unique characteristics.	"Could you please help us make some signs for the classroom? We want to use English and the children's home languages."
Observe each child regularly and use a recording system that is objective, accurate, and avoids labeling.	"Marita and Steven kicked a ball back and forth to each other."
Observe children in different settings and at different times of the day.	"Yesterday I observed Joey playing house with Stephanie. The next time I'll observe him playing by himself."
Collect examples and photographs of work that document children's skills, interests, and progress.	"This photograph shows Lydia cutting an apple with a knife during a cooking activity."
Play and talk with children to learn about their interests and abilities.	"Zach told us a long story at lunchtime about going to the lumber yard with his dad. He said he's going to help his dad build some shelves."

As Eric rips lettuce leaves in half, Mr. Lopez crouches near the table, note pad in hand. "You look ready to make a lettuce roll-up, Eric. What do you want to spread on the leaf—cream cheese or peanut butter?" "Peanut butter!" Eric answers. He places a leaf in his left hand. Then, he picks up a knife, holds it with his fist, and dips it straight down into a jar of peanut butter. He spreads peanut butter partly on the leaf and partly on his palm. "You could lay the leaf on the paper towel to do that," Mr. Lopez says. He demonstrates how to hold the leaf on the paper towel. Eric lays the leaf down. Mr. Lopez makes another suggestion, "You might find a more comfortable way to hold the knife." Eric experiments with several ways to grip the knife until he finds one that works. He rolls up the lettuce leaf and takes a bite. Mr. Lopez takes a photograph of Eric eating the snack, then makes some notes: "Eric chose peanut butter, responded positively to my suggestions, tried different ways to hold the knife, and kept trying until he succeeded."

1. **How did Mr. Lopez take advantage of a routine to learn about Eric?**

2. **What did Mr. Lopez learn about Eric?**

Working as a Team to Offer an Individualized Program

Meet regularly with colleagues to plan and evaluate the program.	"Let's discuss next week's trip to the farmer's market and also the props we can add to the house corner."
Use information gathered through observations to plan for individual children and the class.	"Sam and Travis have been quickly finishing all our puzzles lately. What else can we provide to support their eye-hand coordination skills?"
Include parents in planning for their children's growth and development.	"Let me tell you about the foods Pam especially likes in case you want to serve them at home, too."
Use creative thinking skills such as brainstorming in planning and in solving problems.	"We're seeing a lot of superhero play lately. Let's plan some strategies for dealing with this aggressive behavior."
Change the environment, materials, interest areas, routines, and activities to address children's individual characteristics.	"Alexis and Lily have taken quite an interest in bugs this spring. I'll add some Eric Carle books and posters on insects to the library area."
Appreciate and use the strengths of all team members, including teachers, parents, and volunteers.	"Ms. Red Cloud will be our guest next week. She's going to teach the children a special dance."

Ms. Richards and Ms. Kim agree to meet on Friday to talk about the children's outdoor activities and ways to offer new materials and challenges. For the rest of the week, they note the skills used by children outdoors. Ian collects some leaves, Justin makes a network of roads in the sandbox, and Katherine uses long strokes to paint the side of the building with water. Ms. Kim takes photographs of a village several children built from boxes. She notes that Martha is the leader of this project. Ms. Richards tapes voices of the children and a visiting librarian acting out *Ask Mr. Bear*. On Friday the teachers share the information collected during the week and make some plans. Ms. Kim says, "The children really enjoyed building a village. Let's get some more boxes and building props." "I was thinking the same thing," says Ms. Richards. "We could also read and act out other books." The teachers then consider ways to build on individual skills and interests. They think Ian might like to help plant a garden and Justin would enjoy using small cars in the sandbox. They decide to bring the easels outdoors to support Katherine's interest in painting.

1. **How did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards use a team approach to planning?**

2. **How did the teachers use observation recordings to plan for individual children?**

Following Administrative Policies and Procedures

Review program policies and procedures before starting a new task.	"I need to find out how we arrange a trip to the Children's Museum."
Complete management tasks according to a schedule.	"I'd like to review the parent evaluations, Ms. Snyder, so we can respond to their concerns and suggestions."
Use the program's system for reports and recordkeeping.	"Can you keep an eye on the children while I fill out the accident report for Paul's skinned knee."
Keep informed about teachers' job responsibilities.	"I've heard that new regulations for reporting suspected child abuse are being developed. Will we have a staff meeting to discuss them?"
Share ideas about program policies and procedures with colleagues and the supervisor.	"All the classes schedule outdoor play at the same time, so the play yard is pretty crowded. Perhaps we can talk about staggering outdoor times so that we're not all in the play yard at 11:00 every morning."
Answer parents' questions about program operations and refer them to the supervisor, if appropriate.	"Mr. Kaplan, we have to follow the health department's rules for giving children medicine at the program. We need your written permission and a note from a doctor."

Ms. Williams is in the staff lounge reviewing the Staff Handbook. "Even though I've been working here for awhile," she tells Ms. Richards "I need to review our policies now and then. Do you know where to find information on preparing for a field trip?" Ms. Richards replies, "It's in the section on program activities. The appendix has samples of completed field trip forms and a planning checklist. Before our class went to the fire station, we used the samples to fill out permission forms and to complete the form used to request use of the van." Ms. Williams finds the program activities section and locates the sample forms and checklist. She later submits a field trip request form, contacts the nature center to get information needed to complete the checklist, and sends permission slips home to parents.

1. **How did Ms. Williams stay informed about administrative policies and procedures?**

2. **What tasks did Ms. Williams complete according to the program's policies?**

Managing Your Own Life

Many of the things you do at home require use of management skills. Management skills such as observing, individualizing, and planning are used both in home and work settings. For example, when you plan a trip to the grocery store, you might begin by making a list. You consider how many people will be eating each meal, what foods each person likes, and what ingredients you need for each meal. You can do this because you observe each member of your household, include them in planning balanced meals, and follow recipes—the "policies and procedures" for food preparation.

The more orderly and efficient you are in managing your life outside of work, the more time you have to do things other than chores. The more planning you do as a team, the more likely you and your family and friends will enjoy spending time together. Think about times when careful management encourages efficient use of your time.

- You do all of your errands at the same time rather than making several separate trips.
- You make sure you have all the tools and materials you need before you start a project, such as painting a room or repairing a bicycle.
- You keep records of all bills and file receipts promptly.
- You keep emergency numbers posted beside the telephone.
- You plan trips or vacations that are of interest to everyone.
- You borrow a folding table and extra chairs from a neighbor when you are having a crowd over for a special meal or a neighborhood meeting.
- You make a list of what you have to do (have the car inspected), what you'd like to do (get a haircut), and what you can do later (shop for new running shoes).
- You remember the importance of relaxation and make time for exercise and spending time with friends and family.

Organizing your time and your environment to work for you rather than against you helps you manage more effectively.

Use the chart on the following page to record something you've already done to manage your life more effectively, and to plan a strategy you can use for solving a frustrating situation. The chart begins with an example.

Frustrating Situation	Solution
I used to spend time practically every day searching for my keys.	*I put a hook on the inside wall by the door. Now I hang my keys there every day when I get home*

When you have finished this overview section, complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of the module if you need definitions of the terms used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills teachers use as program managers. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Learning About Each Child's Culture, Language, Family, Skills, Needs, and Interests

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Communicate with parents often to learn about a child's family life, culture, home language, and unique characteristics.	☐	☐	☐
2. Observe each child regularly and use a recording system that is objective, accurate, and avoids labeling.	☐	☐	☐
3. Observe children in different settings and at different times of the day.	☐	☐	☐
4. Collect examples and photographs of work that document children's skills, interests, and progress.	☐	☐	☐
5. Play and talk with children to learn about their interests and abilities.	☐	☐	☐

Working as a Team Member to Offer an Individualized Program

6. Meet regularly with colleagues to plan and evaluate the program.	☐	☐	☐
7. Use information gathered through observations to plan for individual children and the class.	☐	☐	☐

Working as a Team Member to Offer an Individualized Program

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Include parents in planning for their children's growth and development.	☐	☐	☐
9. Use creative thinking skills such as brainstorming in planning and in solving problems.	☐	☐	☐
10. Change the environment, materials, interest areas, routines, and activities to address children's individual characteristics.	☐	☐	☐
11. Appreciate and use the strengths of all team members, including teachers, parents, and volunteers.	☐	☐	☐

Following Administrative Policies and Procedures

12. Review program policies and procedures before starting a new task.	☐	☐	☐
13. Complete management tasks according to a schedule.	☐	☐	☐
14. Use the program's system for reports and recordkeeping.	☐	☐	☐
15. Keep informed about teachers' job responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐

Following Administrative Policies and Procedures

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
16. Share ideas about program policies and procedures with colleagues and the supervisor.	☐	☐	☐
17. Answer parents' questions about program operations and refer them to the supervisor, if appropriate	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module, you can list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 12, Program Management.

Learning Activities

I. Using a Systematic Approach to Observing and Recording

In this activity you will learn to:

- Complete observation recordings that are objective, accurate, and complete
- Work with colleagues to regularly observe and record each child's behavior

Observing children is an ongoing process for people with children in their lives. They watch infants play and thrill at seeing them respond to others with cooing, smiles, and laughter. They share stories with parents and grandparents about toddlers' first words and expanding physical skills. They watch preschoolers as they learn to play cooperatively with others.

Observations are a useful way to get to know individual children—what they like to do, what skills they are developing, who they like to be with. It helps to have a focus for the observation. For example, you might want to learn how different children respond to new materials or explore a new interest area.

Early childhood teachers observe children for a variety of reasons.

To determine each child's interests, strengths, and needs. "Bobby likes to organize new items on the science table. He sorts collections in egg cartons."

To plan an individualized program. "There's been a lot of interest in dinosaurs lately. Let's talk about using a dinosaur theme in several interest areas next week."

To document each child's progress. "I've recorded several examples showing Sarah's use of fine motor skills."

To address a challenging behavior. "I reviewed my notes, and it seems that Jim hits other children when he doesn't know how to enter a group."

To report children's progress to parents, colleagues, and specialists. "Ms. White, I'd like to share some of my observations of Jared's ability to solve problems. My notes show how his skills have developed since we last met."

To evaluate the effects of the environment and activities. "Please bring your observations of children's use of the reading area so we can discuss what's working well and what we might want to change."

Teachers use the information gained through observation to provide a quality program that meets individual and developmental needs. They share information with colleagues and parents and use it to plan activities, add or change materials, and guide their personal interactions with children.

Observation recordings must be complete, accurate, and objective.

The primary purpose of an observation is to collect accurate and useful information about a child. This requires a careful, systematic approach. You and your colleagues need to watch, listen to, and write down what children do and say as it happens, according to a particular method. The information you write down is called a *recording*.

To be complete, recordings must include several facts. These are:

- the child's name and age;
- the observer's name;
- the date of the observation;
- the setting (where the activity is taking place and who is involved—for example, "Debby and Ronisha sit on the floor in the library area looking at books"); and
- the behavior (what the child you are observing does and says).

Observation is an ongoing process.

A single observation cannot provide a complete picture of a child. Children, like adults, do not behave in the same ways all the time. Illness, reactions to events at home or the program, and other factors affect what children do and say. Several brief (five- to ten-minute) observations can provide the information needed to determine a child's interests, skills, and needs. You can observe during indoor and outdoor activities over a period of time, as children arrive and leave the program, and as they move from one activity to another, clean up, set the table for meals, and interact with other children and staff. Children change over time; therefore, observation is an ongoing process. Work with your colleagues to develop a schedule for conducting regular observations of all the children in the class.

A collection of observation recordings completed over a period of time should address all areas of a child's development. A single observation, however, can provide information about several areas at one time, particularly if the observation is focused on one or more aspects of the child's development. For example, you might observe a child's:

- fine motor skills
- self-discipline
- thinking and problem-solving skills
- self-help skills
- gross motor skills
- role during cooperative play
- emerging reading and writing skills
- self-confidence
- creativity
- social skills

When you have collected several recordings on a child, you can make comments such as the following:

- "Tara can retell a familiar story in her own words."
- "Sarah can build a tower with the unit and double-unit blocks, balance blocks of different sizes, and use a variety of blocks and unit cubes to add detail to her structures."
- "Leo can match primary and secondary colors, name 'red' and 'black,' and mix white paint with other colors to make lighter shades."

To draw conclusions such as these, you must be sure that your recordings are objective and accurate. Objective and accurate recordings include only the facts about what is seen and heard. They do not include labels or judgments. Compare the following excerpts from an observation of a child at the water play table.

Example 1: Objective and Accurate

> *Tony moved the water back and forth with the funnel. The water splashed inside and outside the basin. Some fell on other children's shoes. Tony began to giggle.*

Example 1 is an objective recording. It includes only the facts of what Tony did ("moved the water back and forth"), what happened ("the water splashed inside and outside the basin"), and his reaction ("Tony began to giggle"). Accurate recordings include all the facts about what a child does and says in the order they happen. Information is not omitted or recorded out of order. Read the following two examples about the same observation.

Example 2: Not Objective

> *Tony was bad today. He angrily splashed the water on the floor and on other children at the water basin. Then he laughed at them.*

Example 2 is not an objective recording. It uses a label ("bad") and makes judgments ("he angrily splashed the water," "he laughed at them"). Given what the teacher saw, he or she could not know what Tony was laughing at or whether he acted in anger. A recording that he was "bad" does not tell anything useful about his behavior, since "bad" is a word that means different things to different people.

Example 3: Not Accurate

> *Tony stood at the water basin looking to see if a teacher was watching him. He giggled and began to splash water on other children.*

In Example 3 a fact is added that has not been observed ("looking to see if a teacher was watching him"). A fact is omitted ("Tony moved the water back and forth with the funnel"). And a fact is written out of order ("He giggled and began to splash water. . .").

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Making an objective and accurate recording such as Example 1 requires practice. Opportunities for taking brief notes are present throughout the day. With practice, you will become skilled at completing recordings as you play with, care for, and eat with young children. Here are some examples.

Examples

Child: *Natalia* **Age:** *3 yrs, 3 mos.* **Date:** *February 4*

Setting:

Near the entrance, in cubby area, at morning arrival. Natalia with her Grandfather.

Behavior:

Natalia enters, holding her grandfather's hand. G-fthr pulls her parka off over her head. Natalia smiles at G-fthr as he pats her hair down. She sits on the floor and silently lifts her foot. G-fthr kneels down and takes her boots off. Then G-fthr leaves and Natalia stands by her cubby, looking around the room.

Child: *Anthony* **Age:** *4 yrs, 4 mos.* **Date:** *August 30*

Setting:

Outdoors, Anthony is kneeling by the 18" high slice of tree stump, with Ms. Ash (volunteer).

Behavior:

Anthony rubs the palm of his right hand on the tree stump. He traces a tree ring with his right index finger. He picks up the hammer in his right hand and a roofing nail in his left hand. Holding the nail between his left index finger and thumb, he begins to pound the nail into the tree stump. Looks up at Ms. Ash—says to her, "My Dad is building new steps on our house."

Child: *Julie* **Age:** *5 yrs.* **Date:** *February 14*

Setting:

Table toys area. Julie @ table with parquetry blocks & patterns.

Behavior:

Julie dumps blocks out of basket loudly. Takes pattern card. Looks at card, lays it down on table. Moves blocks, picks up rd, places it on matching shape on card. Picks up bl, places on matching shape. Continues, picking up blocks & matching each block to pattern..

Use these tips for recording observations of children.

Here are some suggestions for recording your observations of children:[1]

- Write what you see, not what you think is happening.
- Jot down notes frequently. Carry a pad or index cards and pencil with you.
- Use short phrases rather than complete sentences, to save time.
- Abbreviate what a child said—don't try to write all the words, but get the gist of what is said.
- Describe how a child is doing or saying something.
- Develop a system of abbreviations or initials; for instance, for areas of the room use *qu-quiet*, *dr-dramatic play*.
- Use arrows to indicate movement.
- Make diagrams of the environment showing the child in relation to the setting, other children in the room, and adults.
- Underline words to indicate a particular intensity (for instance, "said loudly").

In addition to recording in an objective and accurate way, teachers must be sure that they see and hear what others see and hear. Eyewitness accounts of accidents demonstrate how several people, seeing exactly the same event, have different stories to tell. This may happen to you as well.

To ensure accuracy, compare your observations with others.

For example, one teacher sees Linda feeding her baby doll dirt and Julie taking the doll from her and trying to drown it. Another, watching the same children, observes Linda smearing mud on a doll and Julie giving it a bath. Knowledge of what a child has done in the past, your feelings about certain behaviors, the child's tone of voice, and many other factors can influence what you observe and record.

It is useful to compare your recordings about a child to those made by a colleague. If they are similar, your are maintaining an accurate record. If they are different, the information collected may be not useful. Two teachers with different perceptions of a child's behavior should observe the child together over a short period of time. After each observation they can compare their recordings and discuss what they have seen. This method helps ensure accurate recordings. If the recordings still differ greatly, your director or trainer can assist in solving the problem.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you practice observing and recording. You can use the form on the following page, or one of your own design. Select a child to observe over a one-week period. Observe the child for five to ten minutes each per day. On at least two occasions, ask your director, a colleague, or your trainer to observe the same child at the same time as you are observing. Compare your recordings after each joint observation and at the end of the week.

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[1] Adapted from materials developed by the Head Start Resource and Training Center (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 1975).

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Make several copies of this form before recording your observations.

OBSERVATION FORM

Child: ____________________ **Age:** ____________________

Observer: ____________________ **Date:** ____________________

Setting: ____

Behavior:

Check to see if your recordings are objective, accurate, and similar to those of your co-observer. If your recordings differ and are not objective and accurate, select another child to observe and repeat this learning activity. Ask your trainer to observe with you again and record information about the same child. Then discuss your recordings with your trainer and begin the next learning activity.

II. Individualizing the Program

In this learning activity you will learn to:

- Observe children to learn about their culture, family, strengths, needs, and interests
- Tailor the program to respond to children's individual characteristics

High-quality early childhood programs are based on two understandings: the typical developmental characteristics of three- to five-year olds and the characteristics of individual children. The environment, materials, activities, and interactions between adults and children in such programs reflect children's developmental levels and respond to each child's culture, family, strengths, needs, and interests. For example, while preparing for a neighborhood walk, Ms. Williams and Ms. Frilles use what they know about preschoolers and what they know about individual children.

High-quality early childhood programs reflect and respond to children's stages of development and individual needs.

Preschoolers can act without thinking, so the teachers make a group-walk rope to keep the children safe while walking on busy streets. Next, they fill a wagon with large balls, buckets, and shovels—items enjoyed by most preschoolers, including the children in their class. They add some items with individual needs, interests, and skills in mind. LaShon and Tony like quiet activities, so Ms. Williams puts large chalk for drawing on sidewalks and picture books in the wagon. Several children play games with rules, so Ms. Frilles brings a T-ball stand and plastic bats and balls. Knowing that even with the rope, Carlos and Andy have difficulty staying with the class, the teachers hold their hands on the walk to and from the park.

To offer an individualized program, you need to know what makes each child special. Each day, as you talk and play with children, you learn a lot about them: Alicia is a leader on the playground and during dramatic play; Reynaldo is learning to share; Teresa changes best friends several times a day; Berta's vocabulary is expanding rapidly in both Spanish and English. Through observations, discussions with colleagues, and one-on-one conversations with children, you keep up-to-date on how children are growing and changing. Getting to know children also includes learning about their cultures, languages, and families. Many of the strategies for establishing partnerships with families described in Module 11, Families, also help you recognize children's unique characteristics.

Teachers don't have to provide separate materials and activities for each child.

Individualizing the program does not mean you have to provide a separate set of materials or plan one-on-one activities for each child. Instead, you can respond to individual children during your regular planning process. To do this, you and your colleagues review observation notes, examine samples of children's work, and reflect on recent events and interactions. You think about what individual children enjoy doing, what materials they use, what skills they are developing, and what's happening in their lives. Here is an example of teachers planning an individualized program.

Ms. Thomas says she has observed three-year-old Brian trying to pedal a tricycle. He only just reaches the pedals, so he is having a hard time. Mr. Lopez agrees—he, too has noticed Brian's efforts. They discuss Brian's learning style. Rather than give up in frustration, Brian keeps trying to figure out a way to make the pedals work. Mr. Lopez reviews the checklist he used last month to assess Brian's physical skills and notes that last month Brian was not using the pedals at all. Ms. Thomas shares that Brian's house has a long paved driveway. His grandmother has mentioned that there is an old tricycle in their garage that needs to be repaired. The teachers develop a plan.

Background. Brian has a tricycle at home and a place to ride it. Ms. Thomas will tell Brian's grandmother about his efforts and ask if the tricycle has been repaired. If so, she will suggest encouraging Brian to ride at home.

Need. Brian needs to practice riding on a tricycle that is an appropriate size. Mr. Lopez will exchange the larger tricycle with a smaller tricycle from another classroom.

Skill. Brian is self-motivated and works hard to meet challenges. Everyone will let Brian know they realize he is working hard to master riding the tricycle.

Interest. Brian seems to really like trike riding.

Teachers will continue observing Brian to see if the above plans are effective. When Brian masters trike riding, they will build on his skills and interests by offering props such as a firefighter hat, street signs, or cones to ride around.

In the above example, the teachers responded to Brian by incorporating strategies within their existing approach and schedule. They didn't take Brian away from the class to teach him to ride. Instead, they planned to offer appropriate equipment, work with his family, offer encouragement, and build on his interests. These are all strategies that contribute to individualizing. The chart that follows provides some examples of how to individualize the different elements of your program. As you read this chart you will notice that many of the developmentally appropriate practices you already use contribute to an individualized program.

Individualizing Strategies

Program Element	How You Can Individualize
Daily Schedule (the sequence and timing of daily events)	Include long periods of choice time so children can decide what to do, what to use, and with whom to play. To help children pay attention and participate in group time, divide the class into several small groups. Include the same teacher and children in the groups each day.
Materials (toys, books, equipment, and other items available for the children's use)	Include materials that reflect children's cultures, languages, and families, including books, tapes, signs, and labels. Add new materials to the interest areas in response to the children's changing needs, interests, and skill levels.
Environment (indoor and outdoor interest areas and arrangement of furniture and equipment)	Create a new area or offer a prop box that responds to the children's changing interests. Set up a tent outdoors so the children who have been using the camping prop box can extend their play.
Routines (daily events such as clean-up, meals, and naptime)	Serve milk or juice in small pitchers so children can pour their own drinks or ask for help. Use techniques recommended by parents to help children fall asleep—rub a back, sing a song, sit near a child.
Transitions (the times between scheduled routines and events)	Play word games with children who have difficulty waiting. Allow child who is engrossed in an activity to continue playing while the rest of the class cleans up.
Small-group activities (times when children choose to join in an activity planned and led by an adult)	Plan activities that allow children to make choices, such as making collages, blowing bubbles, or moving to music. Plan activities such as cooking and singing songs that incorporate children's cultures, languages, and families.
Interactions (verbal and nonverbal communications between teachers and children)	Recognize when to help children resolve differences and when to allow them to solve their own problems. Tailor support offered a child to the ways he or she typically handles frustration and challenges.

Including children with disabilities can be a rewarding experience.

As required by federal legislation, many classrooms include children with disabilities. Disabilities might be developmental, such as mental retardation; physical, such as muscular dystrophy; a health impairment, such as human immunodeficiency virus disease (HIV) or asthma; a learning difference, such as attention deficit disorder (ADD); or a hearing, visual, or speech/language disorder. As they do for all children, teachers, parents, and administrators work together to identify and respond to the child's skills, needs, and interests.

When successfully implemented, including children with disabilities in a child development program can be a very rewarding experience for everyone involved. Inclusion provides an environment in which all children can succeed. It helps children with disabilities gain independence and enables all children to develop comfortable, fair relationships with others. It teaches children to resist stereotypes and name calling. Children with disabilities are children first. They thrive in an environment that accepts differences and where adults strive to meet each child's individual needs.

Consider your own feelings about persons with disabilities.

To offer an individualized program for a child with a disability, teachers may need to review their own attitudes and behaviors towards persons with disabilities. Some typical responses include:

- Avoiding or ignoring the child, "Can Carrie be in your group? I never know what to say to her."
- Feeling sad, "Every time I see her walker, my eyes start watering."
- Believing the disability can be fixed, "He'll outgrow his hearing problems."
- Denying there is a disability, "Lots of children can't pay attention."

Although these are commonly held attitudes and behaviors, they do a disservice to the child. To support the child's development, teachers must take time to identify, acknowledge, and address their own personal feelings.

It's important to get to know the child and learn about the disability.

When a child with a disability enrolls in your program, you need to learn about the child and his or her family as well as the characteristics, effects, and treatment related to the disability. Here are some sources of information:

The child. Make a home visit and/or invite the child to the classroom. This will help you get to know the child as a person, rather than focusing primarily on the disability.

The child's parents. Meet with the parents to learn about the child's favorite activities, overall level of development, strengths, and interests. Parents are the best source of information about the child's experiences and developmental history.

Doctors, specialists, and previous teachers. With the parents' written consent, your program can contact professionals who have provided treatment and supported the child's development. The information they provide will contribute to a total picture of the child's characteristics. If addressing the child's needs is beyond your expertise and experience, seek advice from these specialists. You cannot be expected to know about every type of disability.

Professional resources. Use books, journals, and other resources to research the range of abilities and needs that a child with a particular disability could have. Remember though, that the range of individual differences among children with the same disability is as great as the differences among children in general.

Contact regional and national support groups and clearinghouses. There are many excellent resources. Here are a few:

American Academy of Pediatrics
Department C
141 Northwest Point Boulevard
PO Box 927
Elks Grove Village, IL 60009

American Psychiatric Press
1400 K Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders (CH.A.D.D.)
499 N.W. 70th Avenue, Suite 309
Plantation, FL 33317

Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.
615 16th Street, N.W.
Albuquerque, NM 87104

ERIC Clearinghouse for Handicapped and Gifted Children
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Learning Disabilities Association (LDA)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

National Association of School Psychologists
8455 Colesville Road
Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910

National Information Center for Children and Youth
with Disabilities (NICHCY)
PO Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013

Woodbine House
5615 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20852

Once you have an understanding of the child and the disability, you can meet with your colleagues, the child's parents, and specialists to plan an individualized program. In addition, you may need to make accommodations such as rearranging the environment to make the pathways wide enough for a wheelchair, creating books of textured fabrics to provide tactile experiences, or providing several large-print versions of books for a child with a visual impairment. Several additional examples of accommodations appear in Module 3, Learning Environment.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you conduct observations of two children for a five- to ten-minute period at least once a day, for a week. Your recordings should include at least the information asked for on the form provided in Learning Activity I. You can use copies of that form, a notepad, or index cards.

Make two copies of the blank Individualizing Summary Form. Record what you already know about each child in the first section of the form. Then, conduct your observations. At the end of the week review your recordings, summarize what you learned about the children, and plan ways to individualize the program.

Read the example of a completed Individualizing Summary Form on the next page. Then, begin this activity.

Individualizing Summary Form

(Example)

Child: *Silvio* **Age:** *3 years, 6 months* **Date:** *March 15*

Describe what you know about the child's culture, home language, and family:

Silvio's parents are Italian-American, born in the United States. His grandparents, who live nearby, were born in Italy and came to this country as young adults. Silvio hears both Italian and English at home. His grandparents talk to him about life in Italy. His grandfather has promised to take Silvio out on his boat, but his parents want to wait until Silvio is a little older.

Provide some examples of this child's skills and strengths:

Silvio is cooperative and follows classroom rules with only a few reminders. He can balance blocks, fill and pour sand and water from a container, draw with markers and crayons, listen to a short story, set the table, settle himself for a nap, and roll and pound playdough.

List some skills this child is learning:

Silvio is learning to participate in group play and activities, use props such as the sifter, baster, and rolling pin, use eating utensils, and participate in a conversation.

Describe this child's favorite materials, activities, and special interests:

Silvio's favorite activities are sand and water play and block building. He's very interested in boats. He points to pictures of boats in books and says that his Grandpa has a boat.

Conduct your observations, then use the guidelines to answer the following questions.

How did this child usually play (alone, with several friends, in a group)?

He frequently played alone. Sometimes he played with Roy or Clara. He also joined a group at the sand/water table and outdoors in the sandbox.

What materials, activities, and interest areas did this child select?

Indoors he chose the block area along with Roy or Clara and spent a lot of time at the sand/water table (prefers sand to water play). He rolled playdough with a thick, short dowel. Outdoors he used shovels, buckets, and pouring containers.

What skills did this child use?

He stayed involved with his play when alone or with one or two others. He balanced objects while building, poured without spilling, asked teachers for help when needed, and talked to Roy and Clara.

What did this child find challenging?

Joining and staying with a group at play. Large muscle activities, such as throwing and kicking a ball and balancing on one foot. Talking to children other than Roy and Clara.

Use what you already knew about this child, and what you learned through your observations to develop an individualized plan. You may not need to individualize all program elements.

Individualized Plan for: *Silvio*

Program Element	How You Can Individualize
Daily Schedule (the sequence and timing of daily events)	*No changes needed.*
Materials (toys, books, equipment, and other items available for the children's use)	*Provide large trucks in sand box for Silvio to lift and push.* *Provide more books about boats.*
Environment (indoor and outdoor interest areas and arrangement of furniture and equipment)	*Ask Silvio's family to suggest some props and dress-up clothes to include in the dramatic play area to encourage his participation.*
Routines (daily events such as clean-up, meals, and naptime)	*Sit with Silvio and model using utensils. Offer tips to help him master use of a spoon and fork.*
Transitions (the times between scheduled routines and events)	*No changes needed.*
Small-group activities (times when children choose to join in an activity planned and led by an adult)	*Invite Silvio to play balancing games outdoors as well as indoors.* *Ask Silvio's family for some simple recipes we could use in a cooking activity. Encourage Silvio to join in.*
Interactions (verbal and nonverbal communications between teachers and children)	*Join in sand and water play, start a conversation with the children there, and encourage Silvio to talk, too.* *Ask a child with more advanced play skills to join an activity with Silvio, Roy, and Clara.*

*Individualizing Summary Form**

Child: ______________ **Age:** ______________ **Date:** ______________

Describe what you know about the child's culture, home language, and family:

Provide some examples of this child's skills and strengths:

List some skills this child is learning:

Describe this child's favorite materials, activities, and special interests:

---

*Make two copies of the form.

Conduct your observations, then use the recordings to answer the following questions:

How did this child usually play (alone, with several friends, in a group)?

What materials, activities, and interest areas did this child select?

What skills did this child use?

What did this child find challenging?

Use what you already know about this child and what you learned through your observations to develop an individualized plan. You may not need to individualize all program elements.

Individualized Plan for: ____________________

Program Element	How You Can Individualize
Daily Schedule (the sequence and timing of daily events)	
Materials (toys, books, equipment, and other items available for the children's use)	
Environment (indoor and outdoor interest areas and arrangement of furniture and equipment)	
Routines (daily events such as clean-up, meals, and naptime)	
Transitions (the times between scheduled routines and events)	
Small-group activities (times when children choose to join in an activity planned and led by an adult)	
Interactions (verbal and nonverbal communications between teachers and children)	

Discuss this activity with your colleagues and trainer.

III: Creating and Using Portfolios

In this learning activity you will learn to:

- Collect work samples and other items in a portfolio to document a child's progress and changing characteristics
- Use portfolios to share information with parents, plan for individual children, and involve children in self-assessment

An important part of a teacher's management responsibilities is keeping track of children's growing skills, changing interests, and experiences that might affect their development. Individualizing relies on current information about each child. One way to ensure that your program responds to children as individuals is to create and use portfolios to plan ways to support children's development.

Portfolios include samples of children's work and information collected from a number of other sources to document a child's activities, progress, and interests. The items in a portfolio are concrete illustrations of a child's efforts, achievements, and learning style. Portfolios can include observation recordings, anecdotal records, notes from parents, developmental checklists, examples of a child's work, and other items that contribute to an up-to-date portrait of the child.

Work samples are records of children's progress.

Work samples are the major component of a portfolio. Teachers save these items, such as a child's paintings or photographs of the child participating in different activities, as records of a child's individual progress. Here are some examples of work samples that could be included in a portfolio:

Work completed at the program or at home:

- drawings, paintings, collages, weavings
- writing (scribbles, labels, letters, names and words, numbers)
- a book dictated to a teacher and/or illustrated by the child
- a book made by the child
- computer printouts
- graphs of a science experiment

Photographs of a child's work and play activities:

- block building or other block structure
- freshly-baked loaf of bread
- shells sorted by size and color

Photographs showing a child's accomplishments:

- standing on the top of the climber
- tying shoelaces
- completing a puzzle

Photographs showing a child involved in everyday routines and activities:

- using a serving spoon
- brushing teeth
- listening to a story

Written records of a child's interests:

- questions—asked or answered during a small group activity
- favorite books
- descriptions of drawings and other work
- comments after a field trip

Video and audio recordings of a child's use of language:

- singing, telling a story, or playing with others
- conversing during a family-style meal
- engaging in dramatic play
- identifying a solution to a problem

Teachers, parents, and children each play a role in selecting work samples and other items to include in the portfolio. Parents might contribute scribble writing done at home, descriptions of the child playing with a younger sibling, or examples of the child's use of self-discipline. Teachers can collect work samples and other items that illustrate the child's creativity, interests, and progress towards developing cognitive, physical, socio-emotional, and language skills. Children can help teachers and parents select items for the portfolio. To help children evaluate

A child's portfolio creates a balanced picture of development.

their own work and activities, ask questions such as: "Which of these books that we read this week was the one that made you feel that you were in the story?" "Which photograph of your block buildings would you like to put in your portfolio?" "Which of these paintings was most fun to do?" The items in the portfolio should present a balanced picture of the child's development through participation in all interest areas, indoors and outdoors, and all parts of the daily schedule—routines, transitions, choice time, and group time.

It's a good idea to try to add something to each child's portfolio every two weeks. Teachers usually share this responsibility, because each has a different perspective about a child. You may choose to set a staggered schedule for updating portfolios so you don't have to do them all at once.

Teachers use portfolios in several ways:

- To share information with parents: "It's easy to see Drew's progress when we compare the drawings he made six months ago to the ones he made last week."
- To review a child's progress, set new goals, and plan individualized strategies: "This videotape shows Aurora telling an imaginative but somewhat confusing story. We'll help her expand her skills so her stories are easier to follow."
- To help children evaluate their work and recognize their own skills and progress: "Tell me about what you and Stacey are doing here in this photograph."

Portfolios should be organized collections.

Portfolios start with a few items but grow quickly! You will need containers large enough to hold the items and a system for organizing them. Containers should be of a size that fits in the locked storage file or closet where portfolios will be kept. Accordion files, magazine files, empty pizza boxes (unused, donated by a local business), or plastic containers with lids might meet your needs. File the portfolio items by date and group them by categories that make sense for your program. For example, you might group them by activity, type of development, or interest area.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you create a portfolio for one of the children you observed in Learning Activity I or II. Review your records for the child and think about what else is needed to create a portfolio. During the next two weeks, collect items for the portfolio, with input from the child and his or her parents. If needed, refer to the examples of portfolio items in this learning activity. Develop a system for storing and organizing the portfolio items. List the portfolio items and explain why you collected them on the blank form that follows. Begin by reviewing the example that follows.

Creating a Portfolio

(Example)

Child: *Shanti* **Age:** *4 years* **Dates:** *February 12—23*

Describe the items you collected for this child's portfolio and explain why they represent the child's skills, interests, progress or other relevant characteristics.

Portfolio Item	Why It Represents This Child
Easel painting of suns	*Shanti learned to mix a new color-orange. She has been painting a lot of pictures with suns and picked this painting as her favorite.*
Notes on conversation with Shanti's mother about trip to doctor	*Shanti used to be very fearful about going to the doctor because she hated getting shots. Her mother said she has overcome this fear.*
Photograph of Shanti and other children playing in the snow and written description of this experience and related activities she enjoyed	*When asked, Shanti said that playing in the snow was "the most fun I ever had." She had never seen snow before so this was a special experience. She listened to stories about snow and joined others in measuring snow before and after it melted.*

Describe your system for storing and organizing the portfolio items.

I used a legal size cardboard file box with a lid and handles as the portfolio container. I organized the items by area of development.

Creating a Portfolio

Child: ____________________ **Age:** ____________________ **Dates:** ____________________

Describe the items you collected for this child's portfolio and explain why they represent the child's skills, interests, progress, or other relevant characteristics.

Portfolio Item	**Why It Represents This Child**

Describe your system for storing and organizing the portfolio items.

Share the portfolio with the child's parents. Then, review the portfolio with your trainer and colleagues. Discuss how the items you included complement your observation recordings. You might also meet with your director to consider how to set up a system for creating, updating, and using portfolios for all of the children in the program.

IV. Working as a Team to Plan the Program

In this learning activity you will learn to:

- Develop daily, weekly, and long-range plans
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your plans

Planning helps you be well-prepared for each day.

Planning involves thinking about what you want to do and how you will do it. It starts by considering children's recent activities and experiences and thinking of ways to build on their interests. When you plan you are better prepared. You have sufficient materials, and are more easily able to involve children in activities suited to their skills and interests. As a result, the program runs more smoothly.

Everyone who cares for and interacts with children at the program—teachers, parents, and volunteers—should be part of the planning team. Many programs regularly include parents and volunteers in planning and implementing the program. The more involved in planning all team members are, the more likely they are to realize the important role they play in carrying out the plans.

Teaching teams often include individuals with particular strengths, interests, and talents. Ideally, each member's skills complement those of others on the team. One teacher might speak several languages; another might be a gifted storyteller. A regular volunteer might be an artist with a natural ability to share her talent with others. A parent could be a carpenter who can bring the program's old equipment back to life. Each member contributes something special to the team.

Long-range planning covers a month or more ahead.

Two types of planning are useful for early childhood programs: long-range and weekly. Long-range planning involves thinking ahead—perhaps a month or more—to consider what materials, activities, and experiences you want to offer the children. For example, if you are going to set up a grocery store next to the house corner next month, you need to plan ahead. Your plan might list tasks such as the following:

- Collect empty food containers and cans, and shopping bags for the store.
- Send a letter to parents asking them to save these items, too.
- Get the cash register and play money from the storage closet.
- Gather writing materials so children can make signs for the store.
- Call the local grocery store to schedule a behind-the-scenes tour.
- Ask the librarian to suggest and reserve some books about foods and shopping.

Long-range planning allows you to respond to changing seasons or to arrange a special event such as a trip, a family picnic, or a visit by a special guest. Thinking and planning ahead ensure that special events really happen.

Weekly plans are also needed.

Weekly plans are more detailed than long-range plans, but weekly planning does not need to be a lengthy process. However, finding time for planning can be difficult. In many programs, teachers who work together hold planning meetings before children arrive, after they leave, or during rest time.

In most programs, teachers use a format to guide their planning meeting and to record their weekly plans. However, what works well for one teaching team may not work for another. A good place to start is to ask yourself, "What do I need to plan that will help me be a better manager?"

Consider these planning categories.

The following categories may be useful for you and your colleagues.

Special focus—a theme or topic related to children's interests and experiences that guides planning of materials and activities for a week or more, depending on children's responses. The team plans a variety of activities and selects materials that are based on the theme. For example, after a trip to a neighborhood pet store, the children explore the theme, "fish." The teachers add plastic fish props to the block corner, plan a movement activity so children can swim like fish, and drape a net over a corner of the library area and stock the area with stories about fish.

Group time—a 10 to 15-minute meeting when children participate in an adult-led experience, such as reading a story or setting rules for using new playground equipment. Group time activities can build on the current theme or an ongoing project. Group time is also used to discuss the day's activities—near the beginning of the day or at the end. Teachers describe the plans for the day, note changes to the schedule, talk about upcoming events, and summarize what the children did. Children talk about what they did at home, their plans for the day, and activities they particularly enjoyed.

Small group activities—open-ended experiences for three to six children at a time, planned and led by teachers. Activities may support the special focus, respond to children's interests, coincide with the time of year—in the fall, a walk to collect seeds or dried grasses—or they may simply be activities the teachers think the children will enjoy, such as making applesauce or planting a garden. The teachers' special interests or talents are valuable here. An adult's enthusiasm for music or weaving is quickly communicated to children and can extend the children's interests.

Changes to the environment—adding or removing props or materials, or changing the arrangement of indoor or outdoor space. For example, teachers might add new transportation props to the block area, a collection of keys to sort and classify in the table toy area, or move the easels outdoors on warm days.

Outdoor activities—the choices offered to children in the program's outdoor space. Including the outdoors as a separate category helps teachers plan for outdoor experiences as thoughtfully as they do for indoor ones.

Teacher responsibilities—the specific tasks each teacher will complete to ensure that the plan can be implemented. For example, if the plan includes blowing bubbles outdoors, someone needs to collect a variety of frames (old eye glasses with lenses removed, berry containers, plastic 6-pack rings) and mix the soap solution. It is important to agree on who will do what and post a list reminding people of their assignments.

Target children—those children who have special skills, needs, or interests that teachers want to address during a given week. For example, a child whose mother is about to have a baby might need extra one-on-one time and books about new babies and older brothers or sisters. Target children also include individuals that teachers plan to observe during the week. To ensure confidentiality, do not include this category in the written plan posted on the bulletin board.

Knowledge of children's individual and developmental characteristics guides the planning process.

Teachers have many tools and strategies they can use to help them plan. First, they know typical characteristics of children at a given age and stage of development. Second, teachers have specific knowledge about each child. Information gathered through conversations with parents and daily interactions with children guide the planning process. Knowing, for example, that a child is going on a camping vacation, teachers can add backpacks to the house corner and books about camping to the library. In addition, daily observations provide important clues as to what changes are needed in the environment and other program practices.

Early childhood teachers must be flexible.

Anyone who has worked with young children knows that even the best plans don't always work out as intended. Relax and enjoy the experience when a walk to a neighborhood playground becomes a trip to a construction site where the dirt movers and cranes have captured children's interests. Join in the fun when the children find different ways to use materials than what you had planned. Extend the outdoor playtime when children are fully involved in a project or a dramatic play scenario. Teachers who work with this age group must be very flexible.

Evaluation is the last step in the planning process.

In many early childhood programs, teachers meet at the end of each day to discuss what happened. Questions such as the following can guide your discussions:

- What did the children do in each interest area?
- Which materials did the children use?
- What worked well? What problems came up?
- Did the children have disagreements, conflicts, or other behavior problems? If so, how were they resolved?
- Which children had problems finding something to do? How did we respond?
- Did we welcome and provide meaningful roles for parents who visited the program?

- What changes are needed in:
    - the indoor or outdoor environment?
    - materials and equipment?
    - our interactions with children?
    - our interactions with families?
    - group time?
    - small group activities?

Plans are modified based on what you learn from evaluation.

Daily evaluation meetings tend to be short, but very effective, because the answers to the above questions are fresh in teachers' minds. As planning is an ongoing process, you and your colleagues can change the weekly plan, if necessary, to solve problems or to respond to children's interests. For example:

- *The storytelling activity went well, but there wasn't time for all interested children to participate. The teachers will offer storytelling again tomorrow instead of introducing a new fingerplay.*
- *Emma had a particularly stressful day. Ms. Kim will spend more one-on-one time with her tomorrow.*
- *Several children had trouble using the new climber. Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards will observe over the next few days to see if the climber continues to be a source of frustration.*

Teachers can use a similar evaluation process when meeting to develop weekly and long-range plans. These are times when observations carried out over time can be useful. For example, the same toys have sat in the same place on a low shelf for several weeks. Putting some toys away, adding new ones, or even changing the location of some items could spark children's interests. Observations also let teachers know when something planned is not working. For example, if children are unable to complete the puzzles and often leave them out unfinished, the puzzles may be too difficult. This observation suggests that teachers should try puzzles with fewer pieces and less complex shapes.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you and a colleague develop, implement, and evaluate a weekly plan. Begin by reviewing the example. Agree on a time to hold a planning meeting with your colleague. You can use the blank form that appears after the example or one of your choosing. Implement the plan, then meet again to evaluate how it worked.

Weekly Plan[1]

Week of: *April 15* **Special Focus:** *Bodies*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group time	*Read* Bodies	*Introduce new fingerplay*	*Dance the hokey pokey*	*Imagine what it's like to be a giant*	*Weekly review*
Small group activities	*Face painting in front of long mirror*	*Body tracings-hands, feet, or whole bodies*	*Hang body tracings from tallest to smallest*	*Bake "people" and "animal" cookies*	*Taste fruits: kiwis, mangos, tangelos*
Outdoor activities	*Play body tag and crawl through hula hoops*	*Measure things with hands, feet, and tools*	*Wash dolls and clothes, hang to dry*	*Use colored chalk*	*Nature walk: look for animals and insects*

Changes to the Environment

Block Area *Wooden people*	**Sand and Water Play** *Rubber dolls and clothes to wash* *Clothespins to hang up wet clothes* *Bubble blowing props*	**Computers** *Install updated drawing program*
Art Area *"People" color paint, crayons, and playdough* *Butcher paper for body tracings*	**Library** Bodies, *by Barbara Brenner,* My Feet, My Hands, *by Aliki,* My Five Senses, *by M. Mille,* I Can Tell by Touching, *by C. Otto*	**Discovery (Science and Nature)** *Borrow guinea pig from Ms. Williams' class* *Materials for making a maze*
House Corner *Small suitcases* *Remove dress-up clothes children don't use*	**Table Toys** *People puzzle* *Small blocks and people*	**Music and Movement** *Hokey pokey tape; scarves; hula hoops*
Outdoors *Colored chalk* *Large boxes to crawl through*	**Cooking** *People and animal cookie cutters*	**Miscellaneous** *Measuring tools: shoes, tape, yard stick,scales* *Unbreakable hand mirrors*

Responsibilities: *Ms. Kim: bring hokey pokey tape and cardboard boxes, install drawing program, get small suitcases from storage; observe Roger, Tori, and Jamal. Ms. Richards: get books from library, borrow guinea pig and get instructions for care, stock interest areas, purchase fruit; observe Andrei, May, and Alison; lead cooking.*

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[1] Adapted with permission from Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd Ed.* (Washington, D.C: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), p. 62.

Weekly Plan[1]

Week of: ______________________ **Special Focus:** ______________________________________

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group time					
Small group activities					
Outdoor activities					

Changes to the Environment

Block Area	**Sand and Water Play**	**Computers**
Art Area	**Library**	**Discovery (Science and Nature)**
House Corner	**Table Toys**	**Music and Movement**
Outdoors	**Cooking**	**Miscellaneous**

Responsibilities:

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[1] Adapted with permission from Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Coker, *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, 3rd Ed.* (Washington, D.C.: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1992), p. 62.

For one week, use the plan you developed as a guide. Meet daily to evaluate how well the plan is working and to determine whether changes are needed. Then answer the following questions.

How did you work as a team to develop and evaluate the plan?

What happened each day?

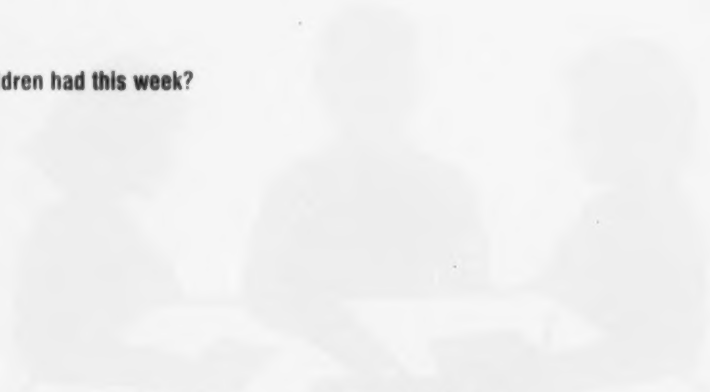
How did children respond to changes in the environment?

Which activities were successful, and which were not?

How did the plan respond to children as individuals?

What changes did you make in the plan during the week?

How could you build on the experiences children had this week?



Discuss your plan and your experiences using the planning form with your trainer and your colleagues.

V. Following Administrative Policies and Procedures

In this learning activity you will learn to:

- Identify your program's administrative policies and procedures
- Complete management tasks according to a schedule

You are part of a system.

As a teacher in an early childhood program, you are a part of a system. Your role in this system includes coordinating with other staff, with parents, and possibly with other offices or agencies in the community. If your program is located in a public school, you may also coordinate with the principal and other school staff.

A program runs smoothly when staff understand and follow administrative policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are outlined in staff and parent handbooks and usually address the following topics:

- hours of operation;
- acceptance/registration procedures;
- fees and service charges;
- safety requirements;
- medical and health requirements;
- fire prevention and evacuation procedures;
- policy on closing for bad weather;
- contingency plans for responding to emergencies;
- reporting accidents;
- using, ordering, and replacing consumable supplies;
- reporting suspected child abuse and neglect;
- reporting maintenance needs for furniture and equipment; and
- using positive guidance.

Policies and Procedures

All staff need to be aware of the program's policies and procedures so everyone follows the same regulations during day-to-day operations. In addition, parents may seek answers to questions about discipline, accidents, or other issues. When you know how such issues are handled, you can respond with accurate information or, if the issue is a sensitive one, direct parents to raise their questions with the director.

Teachers collect and maintain children's records and other forms.

The program's policies and procedures also address your role in completing forms and maintaining files. Records for individual children might include:

- results of child health examinations;
- observation recordings;
- developmental screening results;
- in-depth assessment reports;
- daily attendance records; and
- parent contact forms.

You might also complete forms such as:

- contagious disease exposure forms;
- medical emergency consent forms;
- weekly plans;
- field trip permission forms;
- food service reports;
- inventory records;
- supply request forms;
- staff time sheets; and
- staff leave request forms.

To follow the program's procedures for reporting and recordkeeping, you may find it helpful to keep a list of necessary reports and the date each is due. Some reports may be due daily or weekly. Others are completed when an incident, such as an accident, occurs. Still others, such as inventory reports, are used once or twice a year. Your role will vary according to the reporting task. Some information, such as observation recordings or portfolios, may be collected and reviewed periodically by teachers. Other reports, such as a parent-teacher conference summary, may be completed by one teacher but kept on file in case other people need to review the information.

Maintaining confidentiality is essential. This means you do not share personal information about a child with anyone other than the child's parents or other professionals who also work with the child. Maintaining confidentiality is a part of being a professional teacher.

Your input can help improve the program.

Because you and your colleagues have knowledge of individual children and awareness of developmentally appropriate practice in child development programs, you may be called upon to provide input on program issues. You can talk with colleagues and management staff about ways to improve the program as a whole. Administrators usually welcome suggestions on staffing patterns, class size and composition, enrollment policies, and other practices and procedures that aim to provide a high-quality program.

There are laws and regulations on including children with disabilities.

The past several decades have seen a succession of federal, state, and local laws and regulations which require that children with disabilities be included in regular education settings.[2] The landmark Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142), more recently amended and reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), calls for a "free and appropriate public education" in the "least restrictive environment" for children with disabilities. And the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 extends the principles of non-discrimination with respect to people with disabilities to a wide variety of other settings, including child development programs.

These legal provisions reflect the importance of "supplementary aids and services" (e.g., classroom aides, consultations, or resource services) to achieve the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular programs. The law requires state and local regulations to ensure that staff receive "the technical assistance and training necessary to assist them in this effort" (IDEA, 1991). As noted in Learning Activity II, you should always seek the advice of specialists when addressing needs that are beyond your expertise or experience.

For more information on this Act, contact the Department of Justice Hotline at (202) 514-0301 (voice) or (202) 514-0381 (TDD) in Washington, DC, or the Child Care Law Center at (415) 495-5498 in San Francisco, California.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you review your program's administrative policies and procedures for completing various kinds of reports. Then you complete a report schedule indicating when these reports are due and what teachers' responsibilities are with regard to completing them. Begin by reading the example of a report schedule.

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[2] Adapted with permission from Diane Trister Dodge, Judy R. Jablon, and Toni S. Bickart, *Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades* (Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1994), p. 27.

Report Schedule

(Example)

Report	**Teacher's Responsibility**	**Date Due**
Portfolios	*Complete observation recordings, involve children in selecting work samples, collect other items documenting progress and changing interests, request and collect materials from parents, complete summary form*	*Update twice a month*
Attendance	*Record attendance for class*	*Daily*
Time sheet	*Fill in hours worked each day*	*Every Friday*
Supply requisition	*Request consumable supplies when inventory is low*	*15th of each month*
Annual leave request	*Complete leave request form*	*Two weeks prior to date for which leave is requested*
Contagious disease exposure	*Complete form when parent notifies teacher of child's illness*	*By 6:00 p.m. on the day parent notifies me of illness*
Inventory	*Record quantities of equipment, toys, and consumable supplies*	*January 15 and July 15*

Report Schedule

Report	Teacher's Responsibility	Date Due

Discuss this schedule with your trainer. If you need additional space, duplicate this form. Review and follow your program's administrative policies and procedures throughout the year.

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you develop new management skills.

Before you go on, take a few minutes to summarize what you've learned.

- Turn back to Learning Activity I, Using a Systematic Approach to Observing and Recording and Learning Activity II, Individualizing the Program. Review the recordings completed for the children in your class. What makes them examples of objective and accurate recordings? How did you use this information to individualize the program for these children? How did you use this information in your weekly plans?

- Next, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.

If there are topics you would like to learn more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the Orientation in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. After you have successfully completed these assessments, you will be ready to start a new module. Congratulations on your progress so far, and good luck with your next module.

Answer Sheet

Overview

(pp. 257-259)

Learning About Each Child's Culture, Language, Family, Skills, Needs, and Interests

1. **How did Mr. Lopez take advantage of a routine to learn about Eric?**
   a. *He recorded what Eric did and said while making snack.*

   b. *He took a photograph for Eric's portfolio of the child eating his lettuce roll-up.*

2. **What did Mr. Lopez learn about Eric?**
   a. *Eric can make a choice.*

   b. *He likes peanut butter.*

   c. *He can hold a knife and use it for spreading, with assistance.*

   d. *He can stick with a task until he's finished.*

   e. *He is open to suggestions.*

   f. *He uses trial-and-error methods to solve a problem.*

Working as a Team to Offer an Individualized Program

1. **How did Ms. Kim and Ms. Richards use a team approach to planning?**
   a. *They both agreed to focus on children's outdoor activities.*

   b. *They collected and shared information.*

   c. *They jointly made plans to build on group and individual interests and skills.*

2. **How did the teachers use observation recordings to plan for individual children?**
   a. *In response to Ian's interest in nature, they plan to plant a garden.*

   b. *In response to Justin's road building activities, they will add small cars to the sandbox.*

   c. *In response to Katherine's interest in painting, they will bring the easels outdoors.*

Following Administrative Policies, Practices, and Procedures

1. **How did Ms. Williams stay informed about administrative policies and procedures?**
   a. *She reviewed the Staff Handbook and discussed field trip procedures with a colleague.*

2. **What tasks did Ms. Williams complete according to the program's policies?**
   a. *She filled out the field trip request form, contacted the nature museum to get information needed to complete the checklist, and sent permission slips home to parents.*

Glossary

Administrative policies and procedures

The systems outlined in Staff and Parent Handbooks that ensure the smooth operation of an early childhood program.

Assessment

The process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it, and using this information as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child.

Individualizing

Offering a child development program in which the environment, materials, activities, routines, and interactions with children are tailored to respond to each child's culture, language, family, interests, skills, and needs.

Portfolio

A collection of items—including work samples, observation recordings, photographs, lists of favorite books, and audio and videotape recordings—that document a child's progress and interests.

Recording

A complete, accurate, and objective written record of an observation.

Systematic Observation

Watching and listening to a child's behavior and using accurate, objective language to write down what the child says and does.

Module 13: Professionalism

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Overview

Maintaining a commitment to professionalism means:

- Continually assessing your own performance
- Continuing to learn about caring for children
- Applying professional ethics at all times

Early childhood teachers are members of an important profession.

A professional is a person who uses specialized knowledge and skills to do a job or provide a service. As an early childhood teacher, you are a member of an important profession. You work with children during a time when they are developing more quickly than they will at any other period in their lives. You help shape children's views about learning and the world around them. By providing an appropriate early childhood program, you help children learn to see themselves as competent individuals. This self-confidence will help children make good decisions and lead satisfying and fulfilling lives.

Your professional skills also help families. By building a partnership with each child's parents, you give parents confidence in the reliable, high-quality care you and your colleagues provide. Often as a result, parents' own performance improves. They can concentrate on work rather than being distracted by concerns about their children's care.

Professionals are always open to learning and gaining new skills.

In the early childhood field, professionalism means planning and implementing a program that is based on knowledge of children's individual and developmental characteristics and needs. It also means taking advantage of opportunities to learn more about children and to develop and continually improve new skills.

When you need a service such as medical or legal advice, or electrical repairs, you look for a professional business or individual who can meet your needs. You choose professionals because you want:

- the needed service;
- specialized knowledge;
- a commitment to quality;
- dependability; and
- effectiveness.

Early childhood professionals meet the needs of children and families when they provide:

- the needed service—a high-quality early childhood program;
- specialized knowledge—an understanding of how children grow and develop and of how to meet their needs appropriately;
- a commitment to quality—a developmentally appropriate program in a safe and healthy environment;
- dependability—service on a regular basis; and
- effectiveness—a program that helps children develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally.

Lilian Katz, an early childhood educator, has studied how teachers grow professionally. Her research suggests that teachers pass through four different stages of professional development: survival, consolidation, renewal, and maturity. These stages are described in the following paragraphs.[1]

1. Survival

Teachers at the Survival Stage are new to the field and are often insecure. They devote most of their attention to learning the center's routines and performing tasks as assigned. This stage is called *survival* in part because of the concentrated focus on immediate needs rather than long-range planning. If you are at this stage, you will benefit from a comprehensive orientation to the job and shadowing or observing an experienced teacher. You may want to join a professional association such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Continued training and experience will help you move to the next stage, Consolidation.

2. Consolidation

When teachers reach this stage, they are more confident and begin to look beyond simply completing the daily routines. They seek new ways to accomplish routine tasks and to handle problems. If you are at this stage, you will find it useful to exchange ideas with other teachers and become actively involved in a professional association. Informal conversations, group meetings, training sessions, and open discussions will help you grow and move to the next stage, Renewal.

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[1] Lilian G. Katz, "Teacher's Developmental Stages," in *Talking with Teachers: Reflections on Early Childhood Education* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1977), pp. 7-13.

3. Renewal

During the third or fourth year on the job, teachers may begin to be bored with the day's routines. Often their interest drops and enthusiasm falls. Teachers in this stage need renewal—new challenges to rekindle their excitement and commitment to caring for young children. If you are at this stage, try to attend conferences and workshops, take on a leadership role in a professional organization, or pursue a special interest. These professional activities will provide needed stimulation and help you move to the fourth stage, Maturity.

4. Maturity

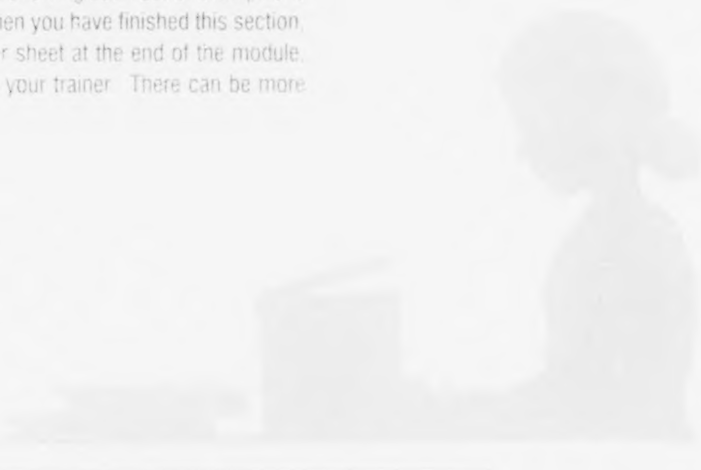
Teachers at this stage are committed professionals. They understand the need to seek new ideas and skills and continue to grow professionally. If you are a mature teacher you can be a mentor for new teachers. You might also gain the skills needed to assume new challenges as a supervisor, trainer, or center administrator.

Maintaining a commitment to professionalism has several positive results. First, learning new skills, acquiring knowledge, and becoming more competent all build your self-esteem. As you become a competent teacher, the sense of success you experience is very rewarding.

Second, when you provide professional care, you are helping children grow, learn, and develop to their full potential. Third, your professional behavior contributes to the field of early childhood education. As you and others provide high-quality programs for children, you build respect for the profession, which can result in more recognition for the important service you provide.

Teaching is not just a job—it's a profession. While you help children to grow and develop, you can enjoy your work, do the best job you can, and continue to advance as a teacher and as a person.

Listed on the following pages are three sets of examples showing how teachers demonstrate a commitment to professionalism. Following each set of examples is a short reading and two questions to answer. When you have finished this section, compare your answers with those on the answer sheet at the end of the module. If your answers are different, discuss them with your trainer. There can be more than one good answer.



Continually Assessing Your Own Performance

Analyze your skills to identify areas in need of improvement.	"I need some new strategies for helping John learn to use his words instead of hitting other children. Perhaps this article on positive guidance will help me."
Ask colleagues to observe you and provide objective feedback.	"Could you observe me reading to the children so I can learn more about how I respond to children's interruptions and questions?"
Use professional standards as guidelines for providing high-quality care.	"This checklist will help us evaluate the safety and quality of our outdoor area."
Review your performance against written procedures and guidelines.	"Even though the children are napping, it's not safe to leave them unsupervised. I'll wait until Ms. Kim returns before going to the supply room."
Accept and address feedback and criticism from parents, colleagues, and supervisors.	"Mr. Drake complained because Jill wasn't ready to go home. I will remind Jill to collect her belongings before choosing a quiet activity."

Ms. Kim sinks down in her chair to think at the end of a long day. The morning started out smoothly, but by late afternoon, when parents began picking up their children, the room was in chaos. A basket of crackers sat upside down on the floor, several children chased each other around the room, and clothes and other belongings covered the floor in front of the cubbies. She groans to herself as she recalls that several parents had complained to Ms. Richards earlier in the week that their children had come home wearing someone else's clothes. When Joseph's mother arrived, Ms. Kim had to help her find Joseph's hat and gloves. They found the gloves with Matthew's coat. The hat was near the block corner, where Joseph had left it when he came in from outdoor play. "This cannot go on," she says to herself. "Ms. Richards and I need to make some changes. Mr. Lopez and Ms. Thomas seem so organized. Maybe they can give us some pointers. Our supervisor can give us some suggestions, too."

1. **How did Ms. Kim assess her own performance?**

2. **What did she do with the results of her self-assessment?**

Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children

Participate in professional organizations and training opportunities.	"I'm going to attend the upcoming state conference to learn more about advocacy."
Keep up-to-date about appropriate practices for encouraging young children's growth and development.	"I'll review the new book on prop boxes and dramatic play this weekend. Then, I can share the information at our next staff meeting."
Talk with and observe colleagues to learn more about caring for young children.	"I'll try to take my break with Ms. Williams today. Maybe she has some suggestions on preparing the children for the field trip."
Use parents as resources for responding to children's skills, interests, and needs.	"Mr. Carter, what kinds of books does Brady enjoy hearing at home?"
Develop and follow short-and long-range plans for professional development.	"I'm planning to finish this module by the end of the month. I'll finish all thirteen by the end of the year."

During his break, Mr. Lopez sits in the staff lounge thumbing through a journal for early childhood teachers. An article on using portfolios to document and assess children's progress catches his eye. "This looks really interesting," he says. "I'd like to learn more about how to begin using portfolios." Before returning to the classroom, he signs out the journal so he can read the article at home. During the next day's planning meeting, he shares what he has learned with Ms. Thomas and asks her to read the article, too. "I've heard about portfolios," she says, "but I don't understand how they are different from what we already do. Perhaps this article will answer my questions." After reading the article, Ms. Thomas is as enthusiastic about portfolios as Mr. Lopez. They decide to ask their supervisor to help them locate other resources so they can learn more about portfolios and begin using them for the children in their classroom.

1. **How did Mr. Lopez and Ms. Thomas choose a topic to learn more about?**

2. **How did they plan to expand their knowledge and skills?**

Applying Professional Ethics at All Times

Keep information about children and their families confidential.	"Children's files are confidential, Ms. Robinson. Only the center staff and you and her father may read her file."
Behave in an honest, reliable, and dependable manner in performing duties.	"Boy, I'm tired this morning, but I won't call in sick, because I know the children need me."
Treat each child as an individual and show no bias because of culture, background, abilities, or gender.	"Jamal, both boys and girls can use the woodworking area. There's room for Marcia to join you and Derek."
Stand up for practices that are developmentally appropriate and speak out against those that are not.	"Make-believe play helps children make sense of the world, Ms. Gwynn. Judson knows the difference between make-believe and fibbing."
Support the center director and other administrative staff by avoiding gossip.	"I know you're upset, Ms. Frilles, but it's best to discuss your performance appraisal directly with the center director."
Support other teachers when they need assistance.	"I'll help you rearrange your room, Mr. Lopez. Let me know when you're ready."
Take care of your personal physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs.	"Tonight I'm having dinner with a close friend. I always feel energized after being with her."

Ms. Jones arrives to pick up her child, Dora, at the end of the day. As she walks in, she glances disapprovingly at Joshua, who is about to jump off a table. Ms. Williams says, "Hello, Ms. Jones. Dora's in the block area making a sign to protect her building. Excuse me a moment." She immediately turns to Joshua and says, "I know you like to climb and jump, Joshua, but it is not safe to jump off the table. Let me help you down. You can jump on the pillows where it is safe." When she comes back, Ms. Jones says, "Boy, he's a wild one. He must drive you crazy. Ms. Williams responds, "Joshua really likes climbing and facing new challenges. Now, let me tell you about Dora's day."

1. **How did Ms. Williams use professional ethics while talking to Ms. Jones?**

2. **How did Ms. Williams interact with Joshua in a professional manner?**

The Early Childhood Profession and You

Each person has special interests and abilities.

Each early childhood teacher, just like each child, is a unique person with special interests and strengths. You bring your own interests and skills to your profession, and you share them with the children in your class. Whether a person shares a love of music or a love of the outdoors, the children pick up on his or her enthusiasm and learn to appreciate something new. By using special interests on the job, you can make your work more satisfying and fun.

You also bring your own personal style to your work. Some teachers have boundless physical energy; others are calm and easygoing. Both styles are valuable. The important thing is to look at your own personal style and consider how it affects your interactions with children.

What are your special abilities and interests? What do you most enjoy? Which personal qualities enhance your work as an early childhood professional? Which ones sometimes make your work more difficult? What do you like best about your job? What would you like to change? These are questions early childhood professionals can ask themselves to identify what makes them unique and what special qualities they bring to the profession.

The reading that follows will help you think about yourself and the reasons why you became an early childhood professional.

Carol Hillman: Gardener, Naturalist, Teacher[2]

I believe deeply that what you are outside of school affects what you are in school. I have a farm in Massachusetts that has for many years been a resource to me and to the children in my classroom. On my farm I grow things, looking after the whole process myself. I like knowing that I can grow vegetables or flowers without relying on chemicals. The flowers are just as important as the edible things. I pick and dry many of them, making everlasting bouquets. The whole process gives me a feeling of self-sufficiency and a kind of calmness.

Those feelings translate to the classroom in unexpected ways. There, as on the farm, I take great pleasure in making do with what we have. I try to show the children those same pleasures. They make bird feeders from cups and chenille-wrapped wire, then take the feeders home and have a season's worth of birds coming and going.

Growing things takes attention—constantly watching what needs water, thinning, or to be picked. I want to communicate that awareness to children. Every morning when we meet, I ask them what they notice that is different. Almost every

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[2] Adapted with permission from Carol Hillman, "Teachers and Then Some: Profiles of Three Teachers," *Beginnings* (Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, 1986), pp. 21-22.

day we go outdoors, not just to a playground, but to the surrounding woods. I want the children to be investigators in the natural world—curious about the stream, the trees, and the leaves on the ground.

My aesthetic sense—a love for beautiful arrangements, shapes, and colors—is also fed by growing things. On my first job after college, I worked for an art gallery and learned how to hang an exhibition. Since then, I have known the importance of placement, whether placing blocks on a shelf or plants in a garden. The blocks, the baskets of parquetry blocks, the puzzles and pegboards must each stand apart to command their own space and importance. This creates a sense of order, not a strict cleanliness. Children need messiness, too.

But beyond that sense of order, my experiences in gardens and the wider outdoors have given me a taste for naturally beautiful things. Rather than stickers or predrawn forms, the children in my classes make collages from shells and sand, sweetgum pods, the bright orange berries of bittersweet vines, acorns, and pine cones.

Outside my garden, my most important role as a part-time naturalist is raising monarch butterflies. For a number of years, I've worked with Dr. Fred Urquart of Toronto, who was looking for the hidden spot where monarchs migrate during the winter. I've been a part of that search by raising, tagging, and releasing butterflies. Only a few years ago, after a lifetime of tracking the butterflies marked by many people such as myself, Urquart was able to locate the monarch's wintering spot high in the mountains near Mexico City.

One part of my garden is devoted to milkweed—the sole food source for monarchs. I find the small caterpillars on the plants and take them to school. During the first few weeks of the school year, we watch the metamorphosis—from caterpillar, through chrysalis, to full butterfly. We keep the monarchs in a huge case for a few days after they emerge. Then, on warm, blue sky days, children take turns holding and releasing the monarchs into the air. It is probably a moment they won't forget.

Taking a Look at Yourself

Reflection is an important part of being a professional. Take time to think about how you feel about your work. Then answer the questions that follow.

I think I'm really good at:

I really enjoy:

I can share my interests and skills with children in the following ways:

What I find most difficult about my work is:

I would like to be better at:

I would like to know more about:

Discuss your responses with two colleagues. Have they learned anything new about you? Do they see things you did not see? Use the space below to summarize what you learned from reflecting on your role as an early childhood professional.

When you have finished this overview section, you should complete the pre-training assessment. Refer to the glossary at the end of the module if you need definitions for the terms used.

Pre-Training Assessment

Listed below are the skills that teachers use to enhance their professionalism. Think about whether you do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. Place a check in one of the boxes on the right for each skill listed. Then discuss your answers with your trainer.

Continually Assessing Your Own Performance

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
1. Analyze my skills to identify areas in need of improvement.	☐	☐	☐
2. Ask colleagues to observe me and provide objective feedback on my performance.	☐	☐	☐
3. Use professional standards as guidelines for providing high-quality care.	☐	☐	☐
4. Review my performance against written procedures and guidelines.	☐	☐	☐
5. Accept and address feedback and criticism from parents, colleagues, and supervisors.	☐	☐	☐

Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children

6. Participate in professional organizations and training opportunities.	☐	☐	☐
7. Keep up-to-date about appropriate practices for encouraging young children's growth and development.	☐	☐	☐

Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children

(continued)

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
8. Talk with and observe colleagues to learn more about caring for young children.	☐	☐	☐
9. Use parents as resources for responding to children's skills, interests, and needs.	☐	☐	☐
10. Develop and follow short- and long-range plans for professional development.	☐	☐	☐

Applying Professional Ethics at All Times

I Do This:	Regularly	Sometimes	Not Enough
11. Keep information about children and their families confidential.	☐	☐	☐
12. Behave in an honest, reliable, and dependable manner in performing duties.	☐	☐	☐
13. Treat each child as an individual and show no bias because of culture, background, abilities, or gender.	☐	☐	☐
14. Stand up for practices that are developmentally appropriate and speak out against those that are not.	☐	☐	☐
15. Support the center director and other administrative staff by avoiding gossip.	☐	☐	☐

Applying Professional Ethics at All Times

(continued)

I Do This:	**Regularly**	**Sometimes**	**Not Enough**
16. Support other teachers when they need assistance.	☐	☐	☐
17. Take care of my personal physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs.	☐	☐	☐

Review your responses, then list three to five skills you would like to improve or topics you would like to learn more about. When you finish this module you will list examples of your new or improved knowledge and skills.

Begin the learning activities for Module 13, Professionalism.

Learning Activities

I. Assessing Yourself

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize your own skills and abilities
- Use the profession's standards to assess your own competence

Every profession sets standards for performance. These standards are not meant to restrict you, but rather to serve as guides. In using them, you, your colleagues, and parents can confirm you are providing high-quality care.

A number of professional associations and groups concerned with the quality of early childhood education have established standards for performance. These standards recommend a child-centered approach that allows children to learn through exploration and hands-on activities. They agree on the importance of basing program practices on child development and building partnerships with families. The standards are listed below. Your supervisor may have copies of these documents. If not, you can order your own copies from the associations identified.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1426
800-424-2460 or 202-232-8777

Several NAEYC publications describe standards and positions on key early childhood issues.

- *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age Eight* offers guidance on meeting individual and developmental needs of children from infancy through age eight. Appropriate activities and teaching practices for children at particular ages and stages of development are described.
- *The NAEYC Statement on Standardized Testing of Young Children 3 Through 8 Years of Age and Testing of Young Children: Concerns and Cautions* addresses standards for screening and assessment.

- *NAEYC Position Statement on Violence in the Lives of Children* discusses the impact of violence on children and how early childhood educators can advocate for public policies and actions that prevent violence, help children cope with violence, and promote non-violent behavior.

- *Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 Through 8* is a position statement that guides professionals through selecting and implementing a curriculum and using appropriate assessment techniques to observe, document, and otherwise record children's work.

- *Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity—Recommendations for Effective Early Childhood Education,* is a position statement that assists professionals in working with families to meet the needs of children who speak languages other than English.

- *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs* describes standards for quality in centers serving children from birth through age 8. The National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of NAEYC, applies the standards as criteria for accrediting centers through the Center Accreditation Program (CAP). The accreditation process involves self-study, a validation visit, and a final team review. Many early childhood programs voluntarily elect to take part in the CAP.

The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition (The Council)
2460 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
202-265-9090 or 800-424-4310

The Council operates a national credentialing program for early childhood educators. The Council awards the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, which is the nationally recognized credential for early childhood professionals. The CDA *Competency Standards* define 13 functional areas in which early childhood teachers must demonstrate competence. The competency standards also serve as guidelines for teachers who are not seeking a CDA credential but want to improve their child care skills. The functional areas serve as the framework for the 13 modules in *Caring for Preschool Children*. The Council publishes guides to the assessment system and competency standards, as well as a newsletter.

National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
1012 Cameron Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-4000

Right From the Start, available through NAEYC, describes how schools can implement developmentally appropriate early childhood units and create partnerships with child development programs. *Caring Communities: Supporting*

Young Children and Families encourages communities to create, review, and extend programs for children and families.

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3483
703-684-3345

The NAESP presents its standards for quality in *Standards for Quality Programs for Young Children: Early Childhood Education and the Elementary School Principal.* This document is particularly useful as early childhood programs forge relationships with public schools.

National Education Association (NEA)
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1426
202-833-4000

The NEA presents its views on standards for quality in *Early Childhood Education and the Public Schools.*

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
order publications from:
Princeton University Press
3175 Princeton, Pike
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
609-896-1344

The Carnegie Foundation has issued its recommendations for meeting the readiness goal to prepare children for school in *Ready to Learn: A Mandate for the Nation,* by Ernest L. Boyer.

Reviewing these documents and completing the pre-training assessments for each of the modules in *Caring for Preschool Children* should provide a comprehensive picture of your skills and capabilities. This review will also identify areas you need to know more about and skills you need to develop or improve.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you select one part of your program on which to focus. You compare and contrast this part with guidelines in two documents that define standards for quality. Next, you discuss with a colleague how the standards apply to your program and to your roles as early childhood professionals.

Standards for Quality

Select one part of your program on which to focus. For example, you might choose the outdoor environment, teacher-child interactions, assessment, curriculum, or guidance.

I will focus on this part of our program: ______________________

Next, select two documents that define standards for quality. If they are not available in your center or local library, order copies from the addresses provided in this learning activity. Record the titles of the selected documents at the top of the columns and summarize how each one defines quality. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Title:	**Title:**
Summary:	**Summary:**

How are these standards similar to each other?

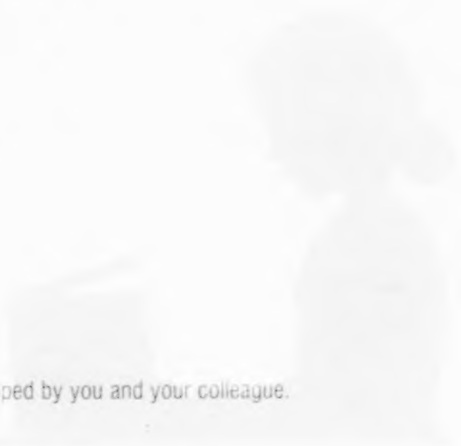
How are these standards different from each other?

Which standards are met by your program?

Which standards are not met by your program?

Discuss with a colleague how these standards apply to your program and to your roles as early childhood professionals. Together, answer the following question.

What can you do to improve this part of your program?



Meet with your trainer to discuss ways to implement the suggestions developed by you and your colleague.

II. Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children

In this activity you will learn to:

- Expand your knowledge and skills
- Make short- and long-range professional development plans

Continual learning has many benefits.

No matter how many years you've been a teacher or how much you already know, it is important to continue to learn more about your profession. This is true for a number of reasons.

- There is always new information to be learned. All professionals need to keep up with the latest developments in their fields. Research and experience often lead to more effective strategies for working with children. Learning is ongoing for the early childhood professional.
- Continual learning makes you an active, thinking person. Teachers who are always learning are more interesting people. They have new ideas to bring to the program to inspire children. If you enjoy learning, you probably help children enjoy learning, too.
- You care about children. Each article or book you read, every discussion you participate in, and every conference you attend, can give you new insights or help you resolve problems. Because you care about children, you are always alert for new and helpful information relating to their development. For example, when a child with a disability joins your group, you can try to learn new ways to include this child in the program's activities.
- You want to grow professionally. A commitment to continue learning can lead to improved performance. Learning can result in greater confidence, more responsibility, a promotion, and may lead to a salary increase.
- Continual learning is affirming. The process of learning tends to affirm the good work you've been doing and the knowledge you already have. You may rediscover ideas you haven't thought about in a while.

How can teachers continue growing and learning? In addition to participating in this training program, there are many other ways you can continue learning. Some suggestions are described in the following paragraphs.

Join a professional organization.

Professional organizations help you keep up-to-date on the latest information and current issues in the profession. Many have local affiliates that meet regularly. These organizations offer newsletters, books, videotapes, brochures, and other publications with useful information and helpful tips. Attending professional conferences is a way to meet other teachers with similar interests and concerns.

Early Childhood Professional Organizations

Organization	Services
Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) 11501 Georgia Avenue, Suite 315 Wheaton, MD 20902 301-942-2443 800-423-3563	Resources and support for meeting the developmental needs of children from birth through early adolescence Journals: *Childhood Education* and *Journal for Research in Childhood Education* Membership divisions for infancy, early childhood, and later childhood/early adolescence Holds annual conference Represented in all 50 states and many nations abroad
Ecumenical Child Care Network 1580 N. Northwest Highway, Suite 115 Park Ridge, IL 60068-1456 708-298-1612	Advocates for high quality, equitable, and affordable child care and education in churches and other religious organizations National, interdenominational membership Committed to applying anti-bias and anti-racist principles in work with children and families
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 1509 16th Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 800-424-2460 202-232-8777 World Wide Web: http://www.naeyc.org/naeyc/	Print and video resources and support for meeting the needs of children from birth through age eight Journal: *Young Children* Holds annual conference Has 360 affiliates at local, state, and regional levels
National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) 1023 15th Street, NW Suite 600 Washington, DC 20005 202-387-1281	Advocates on behalf of the growth and development of African-American children Focuses on critical issues in early childhood education, child welfare, and health care Quarterly newsletter, *Black Child Advocate* Quarterly publication, *Child Health Talk* Annual conference
National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force 733 15th Street, NW, Suite 1037 Washington, DC 20005 202-737-7700 800-U-R-WORTHY (879-6784)	Works to improve wages, status, and working conditions of early childhood professionals Quarterly newsletter and other resource materials

Organization	Services
National Head Start Association (NHSA) 201 N. Union Street Suite 320 Alexandria, VA 22314 703-739-0875 World Wide Web: http://www.nhsa.org/	Represents Head Start children, families, staff, and programs nationwide Agency and individual memberships Annual training conference Training conferences for Head Start community (e.g., parents, policy council) Quarterly journal: *NHSA Journal* Networks with state and regional associations for Head Start directors, staff, and parents
National Indian Child Care Association 279 East 137th Street Glenpool, OK 74033 918-756-2112	Advocates for quality child care for Native American children Represents Tribal needs by communicating unified voice to government of United States
Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) P. O. Box 56130 Little Rock, AR 72215-6130 501-663-0353	Provides a voice on local, state, and federal issues affecting young children Quarterly journal: *Dimensions* and other resource materials Holds annual conference Has 13 state groups

Read books and articles.

Books and articles help you expand your knowledge and skills. The following are good sources of books on working with young children:

Gryphon House
P. O. Box 207
Beltsville, MD 20704-0207
800-638-0928

Kaplan Companies
1310 Lewis Clemmons Road
Lewisville, NC 27023
800-4-KAPLAN

Redleaf Press
450 North Syndicate, Suite 5
St. Paul, MN 55104-4125
800-423-8309

Some of the professional organizations listed previously publish journals with articles of interest to early childhood teachers. The bibliography in the Orientation to this training program lists many helpful resources. Look in both the adult and children's collections of your public library for these and other titles.

Networking is a way to share ideas and get support.

Networking is spending time and sharing ideas, information, and experiences with people who perform tasks similar to yours. It is a good way to find solutions to problems, gain new knowledge, or help colleagues cope with difficult situations. You can network with one other person or with a group. Group networks can include other early childhood professionals in your community or at the state level. Meetings can be very informal, perhaps after work or on a Saturday. They can also be formal, with speakers and a detailed agenda. What is important is that teachers have opportunities to meet, share ideas, and get support in coping with the demands of their jobs.

Use the Internet.

The international communication network known as the Internet provides access to data bases, discussion groups, and files on early childhood education. To take advantage of this resource you will need a computer, modem, communications software program. You access the Internet through an Internet Service Provider (ISP), such as America Online, CompuServe, or other local service. The Internet has dozens of organized discussion groups, called LISTSERVS, that are concerned with children's issues. To learn more about using the Internet, refer to *A to Z: The Early Childhood Educator's Guide to the Internet*, from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, which is listed in the Bibliography in Volume I.

Observe teachers in action to gain new perspectives.

You can learn a lot by observing colleagues, a supervisor, or a teacher in another program. Because each person has a personal style, you can study new approaches to solving discipline problems, managing transitions, or providing a variety of activities outdoors. Seeing how someone else handles situations similar to the ones you experience can offer new insights and expand your repertoire of successful strategies.

Participate in training on topics related to your job.

Attending training is a good way to keep up to date and develop new skills. As you complete each module in this training program, your knowledge of the characteristics of preschoolers and how to support their development will grow.

In addition, training workshops or conferences may be offered in your area. Often these training programs are administered by the Department of Social Services, the public school adult education program, an Office on Child Care Services, a County Extension Office, or other government agencies. In many areas, community colleges offer courses leading to state certification or a CDA credential. Individual courses at colleges and universities may also be an option.

Teach something you have learned to someone else.

After attending a conference or workshop, you can use your knowledge and skills to lead a training session for your peers. This reinforces your learning and contributes to program improvement.

Keep a journal.

Everyone needs to take time to reflect and evaluate, and, if necessary, change the environment, interactions, or routines to make them more appropriate for children. A journal can provide a written record of what you do and what happens as a result of your efforts. Journals also record your successes and help you feel competent.

Ask a colleague to help you assess your performance.

If you are concerned about your skills in a certain area, ask a colleague to conduct an objective, focused observation. Afterwards, meet to discuss the observation notes. If the notes identify problems, plan ways to improve your Skills. Alternatively, you can assess your skills by setting up a video camera in the classroom to record what you say and do and how the children respond. Then view and discuss the tape with a colleague. Identify the skills you want to improve, and plan ways to meet your training needs.

Develop plans for continued learning.

In addition to identifying resources to help you learn more about young children, it helps to have a plan for using those resources. If you know where you're going and how you're going to get there it is easier to take each step and to recognize your goal when you reach it. As you take each step and check it off on your plan, you will see yourself moving closer to your goal.

Applying Your Knowledge

There are two parts to this learning activity. Begin by reviewing your answers to "Taking a Look at Yourself" in the overview section of this module. Pick one item from your responses to "I would like to be better at" or "I would like to know more about." Consider the sources of assistance available to you: the public library, workshops, professional organizations, your supervisor, and other colleagues. Identify specific resources to help you with the task or topic you selected. List what you find on the chart that follows.

Taking Another Look at Yourself

I want to improve or learn more about:

Resources I can use:

Source	**Contact Person**
Public library	
Workshops	
Professional organizations	
Trainer/colleagues	
Other	

Completing this chart has probably helped you think about needs and available resources. Next, use this information to develop a professional development plan. Set short- and long-range goals for professional development, identify possible barriers to reaching your goals, and plan ways to overcome them. For the short term, you might focus on areas you think most need improving. For the long term, you could build on an area of strength, adding to or improving your skills. Read the example on the following page, and complete the form that follows.

Professional Development Plan

(Example)

Short-Range Goals

1. **What short-range goals would you like to pursue?**

   Take a course on guiding children's behavior and complete Module 8, Self

2. **What resources can you use to achieve these goals?**

   The center library

   My trainer and supervisor and other teachers who have expertise in guiding children's behavior

3. **What barriers might hinder you from completing these goals?**

   It's hard to find time to complete learning activities and still care for children.

   I might not find anything in the center library on the reasons for children's behavior.

4. **What can you do to overcome these barriers?**

   I can identify some time-wasting activities that I could do more efficiently.

   Send for the NAEYC brochures: "Helping Children Learn Self-Control" and "Love and Learn: Discipline for Young Children"

5. **Accomplish your goal, congratulate yourself, then set a new one.**

Long-Range Goals

1. **Set a long-range goal to pursue and a time line for achieving it.**

   I will get a degree in early childhood education.

2. **What resources can you use to achieve this goal?**

   I can attend classes at the local community college.

3. **What barriers might hinder you from completing this goal?**

   I have no time to attend school and I can't afford to pay tuition.

4. **What can you do to overcome these barriers?**

   I can take one or two courses at a time rather than a full load.

   I can find out about student loans and scholarships, and other ways to take for-credit courses.

5. **Accomplish your goal, congratulate yourself, then set a new one.**

Professional Development Plan

Short-Range Goals

1. What short-range goals would you like to pursue?

2. What resources can you use to achieve these goals?

3. What barriers might hinder you from completing these goals?

4. What can you do to overcome these barriers?

5. Accomplish your goals, congratulate yourself, then set new ones.

Long-Range Goals

1. **Set a long-range goal to pursue and a time-line for achieving it.**

2. **What resources can you use to achieve this goal?**

3. **What barriers might hinder you from completing this goal?**

4. **What can you do to overcome these barriers?**

5. **Accomplish your goal, congratulate yourself, then set a new one.**

Discuss your professional development plan with your Trainer. Agree on an overall plan to achieve your short- and long-range goals.

III. Applying Professional Ethics at All Times

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize professional and unprofessional behavior
- Follow the standards of ethical behavior in the early childhood profession

Ethics are the principles, standards, or guidelines that identify acceptable behavior. Professionals are people who follow the ethical standards of their profession. Early childhood professionals are committed to doing what is best for all children in their care at all times.

The chart below identifies ethical standards for teaching young children and provides several examples of professional and unprofessional behaviors related to each standard.

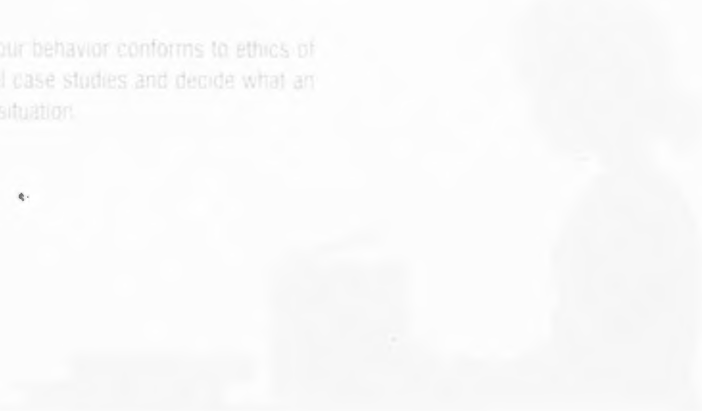
Ethics of Teaching Young Children	Professional Behavior	Unprofessional Behavior
Maintain confidentiality about children and their families.	Discussing a child's problem confidentially with another teacher or the supervisor and trying to identify ways to help the child. "Ms. Kim, Max often comes to the center in dirty clothes. We need to discuss the situation with our supervisor."	Talking about a particular child in front of the child or with a parent other than the child's. "Did you see that child's clothes? I'm glad you don't dress your child like that."
Be honest, dependable, reliable, and regular in attendance.	Arriving at work every day on time and ready to perform your assigned duties. "I'll be ready to go home after I finish wiping these tables."	Talking with colleagues rather than paying attention to children. Calling in sick unnecessarily, arriving late, or not doing assigned duties. "You'll have to watch these kids yourself. I have to call my girlfriend to make plans for tonight."

Ethics of Teaching Young Children	Professional Behavior	Unprofessional Behavior
Treat parents with respect, even during difficult situations.	Talking privately to a parent who always comes late about the problems this causes and discussing possible solutions. "Ms. Lowell. Our center closes at 6:30. If you can't get here by that time, could someone else pick up Jan?"	Getting angry at a parent who is late and demanding he or she do better. Talking to other parents or acquaintances about parents. "This is the third time you've been late this week. I need to go home too, you know!"
Treat each child as an individual, avoid comparisons, and show no bias because of culture, background, abilities, or gender.	Comforting a child who is hurt or upset. Including materials and activities that reflect the cultures and backgrounds of all children. "It's okay to cry if you hurt. Do you want to tell me about it?"	Teasing children if they cry. Comparing one child to another. "Why can't you play nicely like Timothy does?"
Make sure materials, activities, practices, and routines are developmentally appropriate.	Allowing children to participate in routines according to their personal schedules. "Sure, Randy, you can have a snack now. I'll help you get out the crackers and peanut butter."	Making all children do the same activities or follow the same strict schedule for meeting their needs. "Wake up Damian, it's time to eat snack. You've slept long enough."
Be a positive model for learning and language skills. Never use profanities in front of children.	Giving children clear directions that show respect for their work and play. "In 10 minutes, it will be time to pick up and get ready to go outside."	Speaking rudely to children, using harsh words, and a negative tone. "How many times do I have to tell you to clean up? Get busy. Now!!"

Ethics of Teaching Young Children	Professional Behavior	Unprofessional Behavior
Wear clothes appropriate to job. Pay attention to dress, grooming, and hygiene.	Wearing comfortable, clean clothes suitable for playing with and caring for children, bending and lifting, sitting on the floor, and moving quickly, when necessary. "I'm most comfortable in wide skirts or slacks so I can sit on the floor with the children."	Wearing clothes that hinder movement and are inappropriate for a child care setting. "Ask Ms. Peterson to help you. I can't walk on the grass in these shoes."
Maintain accurate, timely, and appropriate records.	Completing an accident report immediately after the incident. "Lori's mother took time to read the accident report on Lori's fall before she went home."	Failing to record information about an accident. "No one ever reads these accident reports. I'm not wasting my time filling one out.
Advocate on behalf of children, families, self, and others. Let others know the importance of quality early childhood programs.	Joining a professional organization. "I'm really glad I joined NAEYC. Their journal articles are filled with information I can use."	Belittling child care work as "only babysitting." "As soon as I can, I'm going to get a real job."

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you list examples of ways that your behavior conforms to ethics of teaching young children. Then you read several case studies and decide what an early childhood professional should do in each situation.



Applying Professional Ethics

Ethics of Teaching Young Children	Examples of Your Own Professional Behavior
Maintain confidentiality about children and their families.	
Be honest, dependable, reliable, and regular in attendance.	
Treat parents with respect, even during difficult situations.	
Treat each child as an individual, avoid comparisons, and show no bias because of culture, background, abilities, or gender.	
Make sure materials, activities, practices, and routines are developmentally appropriate.	
Be a positive model for learning and language skills. Never use profanities in front of children.	
Wear clothes appropriate to job. Pay attention to dress, grooming, and hygiene.	
Maintain accurate, timely, and appropriate records.	
Advocate on behalf of children, families, self, and others. Let others know the importance of quality early childhood programs.	

Ethics Case Studies[3]

The following situations were developed by NAEYC. After reading each one, answer the question: What should an early childhood professional do? These are difficult issues to resolve. You may want to discuss your ideas with others. There can be more than one ethical response to each case study.

1. The Abused Child

Mary Lou, a three-year-old in your center, is showing several signs of possible abuse: multiple bruises, frequent black eyes, and psychological withdrawal. Her mother, a high-strung woman, says Mary Lou falls a lot, but nobody at the center has seen the child do this. On two occasions, the child's father appeared to be drunk when he picked her up. The law says you are a mandated reporter who must report suspicions of abuse to Child Protective Services. But in your experience, when the authorities get involved they are usually unable to remove the child from the home or improve the family's behavior. Sometimes the families simply disappear, or things become worse for the children.

What should an early childhood professional do?

2. The Working Mother

Timothy's mother has asked you not to allow her four-year-old son to nap in the afternoon. She says, "Whenever he naps he stays up until 10:00 at night. I have to get up at 5:00 in the morning to go to work. I am not getting enough sleep." Along with the rest of the children, Timothy takes a one-hour nap almost every day. He seems to need it in order to stay in good spirits in the afternoon.

What should an early childhood professional do?

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[3] Adapted with permission from Stephanie Feeney, "Ethical Case Studies for NAEYC Reader Response," *Young Children* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, May 1987), pp. 24-25.

3. Case Study: The Aggressive Child

Eric is a large and extremely active four-year-old who often frightens and hurts other children. You have discussed this repeatedly with the director, who is sympathetic but unable to help. Eric's parents listen but they think his behavior is typical for boys his age. They ignore your referrals to a counselor. A preschool specialist from the Department of Mental Health has observed Eric, but her recommendations have not helped either. Meanwhile, Eric terrorizes other children and as a result, parents are starting to complain. You are becoming stressed and tired, and your patience is wearing thin. You and your co-teacher are spending so much time dealing with Eric that you are worried the other children are not getting the attention they need.

What should an early childhood professional do?

4. The "Academic" Preschool

Heather just went back to college to get her CDA credential. She has been assigned as your trainee. She has taught at a preschool center for several years, is happy there, and receives a good salary. During your observations, you saw three- and four-year-olds using workbooks for long periods of time. The daily program included repetitious drill on letters, numbers, shapes, and colors. Children were regularly "taught" the alphabet and rote counting to 100. You also noticed that most interactions were initiated by adults and that children had few opportunities to interact with materials.

You mention to Heather that you do not think the center's curriculum is appropriate for preschool children. She replies that she had a similar reaction when she began working there, but the director and other teachers assured her there was no problem with the curriculum. They told her that this is the way they have always taught at the school. The parents are very satisfied with it.

What should an early childhood professional do?

When you have completed these case studies, plan a time to discuss your responses with your trainer and other teachers.

IV. Becoming an Advocate for Children and Families

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize the importance of being an advocate for children and families
- Become involved in advocacy efforts

Advocacy is working for change. Early childhood advocates speak out on issues that may affect children and families or on issues related to their own working conditions. Often, decisionmakers aren't aware of the problems and issues related to providing quality child development programs for preschool children. Without awareness and understanding, change is not possible. As an early childhood professional you are in a good position to help others understand important issues and concerns.

Becoming an Advocate[4]

A first step in becoming an early childhood advocate is to understand the importance of advocacy. This means recognizing how public and private policies affect children's lives and accepting that children need a strong voice to ensure that the programs they attend support their development. Advocates must ask themselves, "What can I do to ensure that policymakers, elected officials, administrators, schools, businesses, and other groups pay adequate attention to children's needs?"

Advocates try to improve the circumstances of children's lives. Early childhood professionals are especially well-informed on this issue in terms of both theory and practice. Advocates commit themselves to sharing their knowledge with others. Because they realize the problems faced by children and families are a collective responsibility, they are willing to become involved and act on their concerns.

You and your colleagues can become effective advocates for children, families, and the early childhood profession in at least six ways, as described in the following paragraphs.

Share your knowledge.

Your professional beliefs and knowledge are based on an understanding of child development, the practice of early childhood education, and relationships with parents. This is your professional knowledge base. Therefore, you can help parents, policymakers, and other decision makers understand children's developmental needs and the characteristics of safe and nurturing early childhood environments. You can clarify the link between policy and positive outcomes for children. As an advocate, you can be a catalyst for change.

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[4] Adapted with permission from Stacie G. Goffin and Joan Lombardi, *Speaking Out: Early Childhood Advocacy*, (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988), pp. 2-5.

Share your professional experiences.

Through your day-to-day interactions with children and families, you are all too familiar with the causes of extreme stress—unemployment, lack of child care, drug and alcohol abuse, chronic illnesses, homelessness, and conflicts between work and family responsibility. You see how children and families are affected by high levels of stress. Your daily work gives you firsthand knowledge of the effectiveness of services community agencies are providing to children and families. You know which needs are being met, and which are not. As a result, you have an opportunity—and a professional responsibility—to share the personal stories that give meaning to group statistics. Without revealing confidential information, you can describe the real impact of policies that affect children and families.

Redefine the "bottom line" for children.

The debate about programs for young children is often tied to other policy issues such as welfare reform, job training, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy. Funding for children's programs is "sold" as an investment in the nation's future productivity. Joining children's issues with broader political issues and social concerns is an effective political technique. It can expand the base of support and help frame children's issues in ways consistent with accepted social values.

Your ongoing work with children makes you an effective advocate for children's inherent "worth." You understand that childhood is a crucial time for development. If policies for children and families are devised solely on the basis of "return on investment," children will suffer when investors seek a higher return or decide to pull out of the "market." We all must remember that these strategies are simply means to achieve a desired end. They must not undermine the "bottom line" of advocacy—encouraging policies that promote children's healthy development.

Stand up for the early childhood profession.

Early childhood education is a growing profession that provides essential services to children and families. Therefore, teachers must speak out on behalf of the profession—and for the specialized skills and knowledge required of those who care for and support the development of young children.

Many people don't know that early childhood education has a distinctive, professional knowledge base or that program quality is closely tied to staff training and compensation. Many teachers have experienced the impact of low wages, high staff turnover, burnout, and inadequately trained staff and administrators. They are obligated to share these stories, too.

Advocacy efforts on behalf of child development programs are most effective when professionals emphasize how their work benefits children and families. Teachers must begin to exercise their power to speak out on issues that affect the profession.

Involve parents.

Your daily interactions with parents provide many opportunities to share your common concerns and goals for children's well being. You can help parents recognize their power as primary advocates—for their own children as well as for all children.

Parents can be especially effective advocates on behalf of their children. They represent a critical consumer voice. By involving parents, you can dramatically expand the group of people speaking out for children.

Expand the constituency for children.

Early childhood professionals may have ongoing relationships with other individuals and agencies that provide services for children and families: public school administrators and teachers, health care providers, religious organizations, and many professional and volunteer groups. These interactions offer natural opportunities to inform others about children's developmental needs, appropriate teaching practices, and the support services families need.

Choose a course of action.

You can choose from many courses of action once you make a commitment to become an advocate for children, families, and your profession. Here are a few choices.[5]

- Share ideas for appropriate practice with other teachers and parents (instead of just observing disapprovingly).
- Explain to administrators why dittos are inappropriate learning tools for young children (rather than using them, while resenting that you must use practices that are inconsistent with your profession's knowledge base).
- Explain to parents why children learn best through play (instead of bemoaning that parents are pushing their children or giving in yourself and using inappropriate methods and materials).
- Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine to respond to an article or letter (instead of complaining about how other people don't understand the needs of children, families, or early childhood professionals).
- Write to your state or federal legislators about a pending issue and share your experiences as a way to point out needs (rather than just assuming someone else will write).
- Meet someone new who is interested in early childhood education and ask her or him to join a professional group such as NAEYC, NBCDI, SECA, or ACEI (instead of just wondering why the person isn't involved).
- Ask a friend to go with you to community meetings where issues of concern to children and families will be discussed (instead of staying home because you don't want to go alone).
- Volunteer to represent your professional group in a coalition to speak out on the developmental needs of young children (instead of waiting to be asked or declining because you've never done it before).
- Agree to serve on a legislative telephone tree (rather than refusing because "my phone call won't matter anyway").

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[5] Adapted with permission from Stacie G. Goffin and Joan Lombardi, *Speaking Out: Early Childhood Advocacy* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1988), pp. 14-15.

- Work and learn with others to develop a position statement on a critical issue (instead of saying, "I don't really know much about this topic.").
- Volunteer to speak at a school board meeting about professional standards for early childhood education set by groups such as NAEYC, NASBE, NAESP, or Head Start (instead of resigning yourself to the fact that your school system doesn't understand much about early childhood education).
- Conduct a local or state survey of salaries in early childhood programs (instead of ignoring the issue because no one has the facts).
- Persuade colleagues that it is important to work toward accreditation from the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (rather than just assuming no one wants to improve the program).

Applying Your Knowledge

In this activity you consider your own feelings about advocacy and develop a plan for becoming an advocate. Review the suggestions in this learning activity, then answer the following questions.

Becoming an Advocate

What contributions would you like to make as an advocate for children, families, and your profession?

What obstacles might prevent you from being an advocate, and how can you overcome them?

What is one advocacy step you can take this month?

What is one advocacy step you can take within six months?

What is one advocacy step you can take within a year?

Discuss your responses with your trainer

V. Taking Care of Yourself

In this activity you will learn to:

- Recognize the importance of taking care of yourself
- Take care of your physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being

Early childhood teachers need to consider their own well-being.

Although your first responsibility as a teacher is to take care of the needs of children, you also have a responsibility to take care of yourself. All you have to give is yourself—your energy, your ideas, and your commitment. You cannot do this when you are not at your best. To work successfully with young children, you have to be in good physical and emotional health. You also need to feel you are appreciated, meaningfully connected to others, intellectually stimulated, and performing a job worth doing. Taking care of yourself means considering your needs and well-being in four areas: physical, emotional, social, and intellectual.

Physical well-being is very important to a person who works with preschoolers. Without physical stamina and good health, you are not prepared to work with young children every day. Three key factors in achieving physical well-being are: eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly.

Emotional well-being—the way you feel about yourself, your work, and the world—affects how you interact with the children and adults around you. The more positive you feel about yourself, the better you will be able to care for children. If you start to feel worried or depressed, it is good to talk with family and friends about your concerns.

Social well-being is essential for survival. Having a trusted friend with whom to share your joys and successes, frustrations, concerns, and ideas, can be very important in determining how you feel about yourself as a person and as a professional. The person may be a colleague, spouse, relative, or friend. What is important is that you have someone (at least one, but preferably several people) with whom you can exchange ideas, feelings, resources, and moral support.

Intellectual well-being comes from the joy of learning something new and feeling challenged. Like children, adults learn from ongoing exploration, experimentation, and problem solving. The more you learn about working with preschoolers, the more satisfying your work will become. This is what professionalism is all about.

Stress is a part of our daily lives.

In Module 2: Healthy, we discussed how stress affects children and what you and your colleagues can do to reduce children's stress and help them cope in positive ways. Most adults also find that stress—at work and in their personal lives—is part of their daily routines.

The sources of stress in your life may differ from those in your colleagues' lives. A situation one person finds stressful may not be for another. For example, you may feel very anxious when you get caught in traffic on your way to an appointment; a colleague might accept the fact that there is nothing to do but sit back, review his plans for the day, and enjoy listening to a new tape. Stress on the job may also affect you and your colleagues. Work-related stress might be due to situations such as:

- disagreeing with a colleague or supervisor;
- getting caught in a rain storm while on a neighborhood walk;
- working with children who have many problems in their lives; or
- supporting a parent whose problems are overwhelming.

Some work-related stress can be alleviated through effective communication, improved adult-child ratios, or revised management practices ("From now on, we'll make sure we check the weather report and bring coats and umbrellas on cloudy days."). Other stressful situations are "part of the job." Working with young children is challenging. Even the most qualified and highly-skilled teachers experience days when their jobs seem overwhelming.

Our responses to stress can affect our well-being.

How we respond to stress can affect our physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being. Some examples follow:

- Responses affecting your **physical well-being** might include:

  increased pulse, racing heart

  increased or decreased appetite

  excitability, hyperactivity

  always feeling tired

  difficulty relaxing, trouble sleeping

  difficulty staying awake

- Responses affecting your **emotional well-being** might include:

  feelings of inadequacy

  lowered self-esteem

  sadness, mild depression

  fear of losing control

- Responses affecting your **social well-being** might include:

  clinging to others

  withdrawing from others

  feeling angry with yourself and/or others

  being unusually impatient

  experiencing mood swings

- Responses affecting your **intellectual well-being** might include:

  racing from one thought to another

  forgetting how to solve simple problems

  thinking about performing routine tasks (e.g., getting ready for work in the morning) rather than doing them automatically

  forgetting important events or responsibilities

  being easily distracted

Taking care of yourself helps you cope with stress.

It's almost impossible to eliminate all of the sources of stress in our lives. Instead, we need to cope in healthy ways so the stress does not lead to burn-out. The responses listed above are messages that tell us we need to take better care of ourselves. The suggestions for helping children handle stress that appear in Module 2: Healthy, may also be useful for adults. Many people find eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, spending time with friends, and taking time to meet their own needs, can help them manage their stress.

When people don't cope with their stress, these responses may continue for a long time. For example, if a person is forgetful for a few days while handling a difficult situation, there is no cause for alarm. If the forgetfulness continues for weeks or months, the individual may need professional assistance. A mental health counselor can help the individual talk about the situation and learn to cope with stress in healthy and positive ways.

Applying Your Knowledge

In this learning activity you assess how well you are taking care of yourself. Record your activities for two days. For Day 1 record your activities for today. Then, review your answers, consider areas where you could take better care of yourself, and try to be better to yourself tomorrow. Record your improved activities under Day 2.

Taking Care of Myself

	Day 1		Day 2	
	yes	no	yes	no
Physical Well-Being				
Did I eat three balanced meals?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did I get enough sleep?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did I get any exercise?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional Well-Being				
Did I have a generally positive outlook?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did I take a few moments to relax after a stressful situation?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Well-Being				
Did I spend time with someone I care about?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did I talk through a problem with a friend or colleague?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intellectual Well-Being				
Did I read anything for information or interest—a book, an article, the newspaper?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did I learn something new?	☐	☐	☐	☐

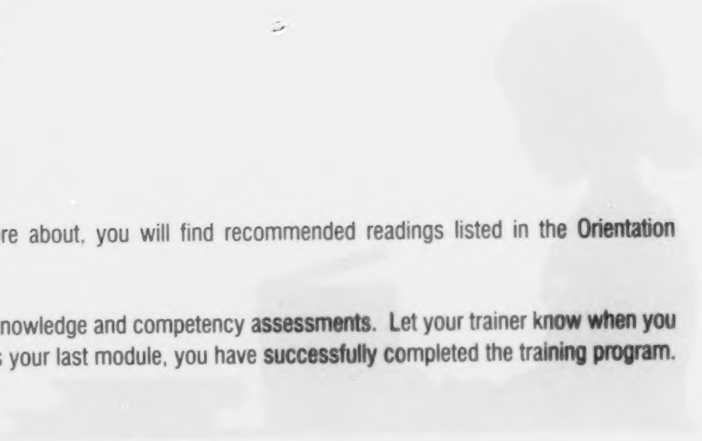
Discuss this activity with your trainer and make a commitment to take good care of yourself. Use the space below to note what actions you will take.

I will do the following to take care of myself:

Summarizing Your Progress

You have now completed all of the learning activities for this module. Whether you are an experienced teacher or new to the profession, this module has probably helped you to learn about maintaining a commitment to professionalism.

Before you go on, review your responses to the pre-training assessment for this module. Write a summary of what you learned and list the skills you developed or improved.



If there are topics you would like to know more about, you will find recommended readings listed in the **Orientation** in Volume I.

Your final step in this module is to complete the knowledge and competency assessments. Let your trainer know when you are ready to schedule the assessments. If this is your last module, you have successfully completed the training program. Congratulations on a job well done.

Answer Sheet

Overview
(pp. 308-310)

1. **How did Ms. Kim assess her own performance?**
   a. *She thought about the day's events.*

   b. *She considered feedback from parents.*

2. **What did she do with the results of her self-assessment?**
   a. *She decided that she and Ms. Richards need to make some changes in their classroom.*

   b. *She planned to talk to Mr. Lopez and Ms. Thomas, two teachers who seem well-organized, to get some pointers.*

   c. *She planned to talk to her supervisor to get some suggestions.*

Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children

1. **How did Mr. Lopez and Ms. Thomas choose a topic to learn more about?**
   a. *Mr. Lopez read an article on portfolios and shared it with Ms. Thomas.*

   b. *They discussed the article and agreed to ask their supervisor for more resources on portfolios.*

2. **How did they plan to expand their knowledge and skills?**
   a. *They planned to ask their supervisor for additional resources on portfolios.*

   b. *They planned to begin using portfolios for the children in their classroom.*

Applying Professional Ethics at All Times

1. **How did Ms. Williams use professional ethics while talking to Mrs. Jones?**
   a. *She greeted Mrs. Jones politely when she arrived.*

   b. *She responded to Mrs. Johnson's comments in a positive way.*

   c. *She maintained confidentiality by not discussing Joshua's behavior with another parent.*

2. **How did Ms. Williams interact with Joshua in a professional manner?**
   a. *She acted quickly to ensure Joshua's safety.*

   b. *She used positive guidance techniques to redirect Joshua to a safe place for jumping.*

Glossary

Competence

A skill or ability to do something well.

Ethics

A set of principles, standards, or guidelines that direct acceptable behavior—what is right or good rather than what is quickest or easiest.

Maintaining confidentiality

Sharing information only with people who have a need to know.

Networking

Spending time with people who perform similar tasks to share ideas, information, and experiences.

Professionalism

A commitment to gaining and maintaining knowledge and skills in a particular field, and to using that knowledge and those skills to provide the highest-quality services possible.

Professional behavior

The consistent, complete application of knowledge, skills, and ethics.

Notes

Teaching Strategies, Inc., strives to improve the quality of early childhood programs by producing comprehensive and practical curriculum and training materials. Our products and staff development services are making a difference in elementary schools, Head Start, and in child care programs worldwide.

Curriculum Resources

***The Creative Curriculum® for Early Childhood,* 3rd Edition.** Shows how teachers build curriculum for preschool and kindergarten children around the environment using ten interest areas: Blocks, House Corner, Table Toys, Art, Sand and Water, Library, Music and Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors. #PS20071, $39.95. *Now available in Spanish*—#PS2074, $39.95

***A Trainer's Guide to the Creative Curriculum® for Early Childhood,* 3rd Edition.** Includes supervision strategies, workshop outlines, self-assessment and observation forms, and handouts for training sessions. #PS20073, $29.95

***The Creative Curriculum®*.** A 37-minute, award-winning videotape that shows how children learn in each interest area and how teachers set the stage and encourage their learning. #PS20072, $99.50. *Now available with Spanish subtitles*—#PS20014, $99.50

A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Education. Also available in Spanish and Chinese. Explains what happens in a developmentally appropriate early childhood program and the important role parents play in helping their children succeed in school and in life. #PS20075, $22.50 (set of 10)

***The NEW Room Arrangement as a Teaching Strategy*.** A 15-minute slide/videotape. Presents concrete ideas for arranging early childhood classrooms to support positive behavior and learning. #PS20076, $35.00. *Now available in Spanish*—#PS20010, $35.00

Observing Young Children: Learning to Look, Looking to Learn. This 30-minute videotape illustrates how staff can use ongoing observation to learn about each child, measure children's progress, and evaluate their program. #PS20054. $55.00

Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades. Combines all of the elements for planning a successful primary grade curriculum. Six strategies for implementing curriculum provide the framework for teaching five subject areas. #PS20077, $39.95

Competency-Based Training Materials

The ***"Caring for . . ."*** series:

- ***Caring for Infants and Toddlers***
- ***Caring for Preschool Children***
- ***Caring for Children in Family Child Care***
- ***Caring for Children in School-Age Programs***

Each of the four sets in the ***"Caring for . . ."*** series is comprised of 13 modules in two volumes which correspond to the Child Development Associate (CDA) functional areas. Volume I covers Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment (Program Environment in the School-Age set), Physical, Cognitive, and Communication. Volume II includes Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families, Program Management, and Professionalism.

Trainer's Guides. Each of the ***"Caring for . . ."*** sets has a *Trainer's Guide* that offers suggestions for implementing the program and providing feedback to staff. They include knowledge and competency assessments, and forms for planning, observing, and tracking progress.

For more information, call (800) 637-3652 or (202) 362-7543, or write P.O. Box 42243, Washington, DC, 20015.

Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Ed.

A Competency-Based Training Program

Volume II

Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Edition, is a comprehensive, competency-based training program designed for teachers who work with children ages three to five. The two-volume set is divided into modules that correspond to the 13 functional areas of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards. The modules include readings and learning activities that help build skills and knowledge as staff work with children daily. This new, expanded Second Edition, completely redesigned and updated, is practical and easy to use. Information is easier to locate, and the content has been enhanced to reflect the newest knowledge about children and changing family and social trends. The set is a valuable resource for teachers seeking CDA certification through The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.

Included in Volume II are seven modules:

7. **Creative**: Arranging the environment to encourage exploration and experimentation; offering a variety of materials and activities; interacting with children in ways that respect their ideas and expressions.

8. **Self**: Developing a positive relationship with each child; helping children accept and appreciate themselves and others; providing opportunities for children to be successful.

9. **Social**: Helping children learn to get along with others; understand and express their feelings and respect those of others; providing an environment and experiences that help children develop social skills.

10. **Guidance**: Providing an environment that encourages self-discipline; using positive methods to guide children; helping children understand and express their feelings in positive ways.

11. **Families**: Communicating frequently with parents to share information about their child's experiences and development; offering a variety of ways for parents to participate in their child's life at the center; providing support to families.

12. **Program Management**: Learning about each child's culture, family, needs, and interests; working as a team to offer an individualized program; following policies and procedures.

13. **Professionalism**: Continually assessing your own performance; continuing to learn about caring for children; and applying professional ethics at all times.

The modules in **Volume I** address the first six Functional Areas of the CDA Competency Standards:

1. Safe
2. Healthy
3. Learning Environment

4. Physical
5. Cognitive
6. Communication

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TEACHING STRATEGIES

A Trainer's Guide

Caring for Preschool Children

Second Edition

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Derry G. Koralek
Debra Al-Salam
Diane Trister Dodge

A Trainer's Guide
to
Caring for Preschool Children

Second Edition

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TEACHING
STRATEGIES

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Washington, DC 20015

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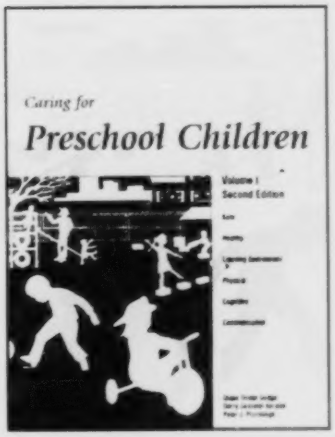
Introduction

A sound approach to staff development is an essential factor in achieving a high-quality program. *Caring for Preschool Children* offers comprehensive, competency-based training for teachers in a variety of early childhood settings. Because the program is self-instructional, teachers can use it at their own pace, as time permits. This approach allows for teacher autonomy in completing the training. But that autonomy also means trainers must play a very active role in advising teachers during the training and in tracking their progress. The trainer's central role is to conduct objective observations of teachers working with children, model appropriate practices, and provide feedback and support. Trainers review and make judgments about the appropriateness of teachers' responses in the learning activities. Trainers also assess the knowledge and competence teachers gain as they complete each module.

The training program consists of a two-volume set for staff and this *Trainer's Guide*.

Caring for Preschool Children Training Program

For Staff:



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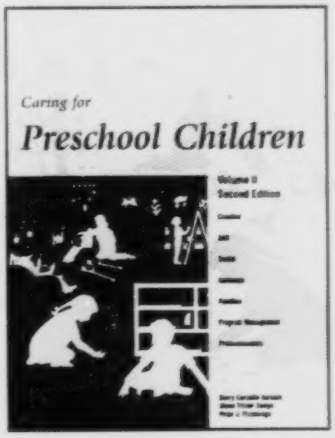
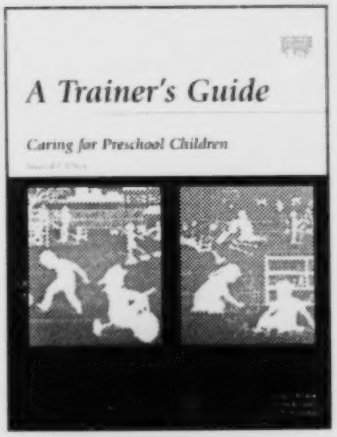


Caring for
Preschool Children
Volume II
Second Edition

For Trainers:



A Trainer's Guide
Caring for Preschool Children

Contents

The Context
Overview
Overseeing the Program
Leading Group Training
Assessing Progress
  Knowledge Assessments
  Competency Assessments
Planning and Training Forms

A Trainer's Guide to Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Edition has five chapters and six appendices.

Chapter I, A Context for Staff Development—Making Training Count, discusses current efforts to establish an organized system for professional development. It describes the components of such a system and shows how this training program promotes career development and program improvement.

Chapter II, An Overview of *Caring for Preschool Children,* describes the training materials, explains the content addressed through the modules, and shows how the training approach adheres to principles of adult learning.

Chapter III, Overseeing the Training Program, provides an overview of the trainer's role in introducing the training program, completing the Orientation, and providing feedback to teachers as they complete each section of the modules. It also describes what teachers and trainers do to complete each module and offers suggested strategies for extending learning.

Chapter IV, Leading Group Training Sessions, is targeted to trainers who will implement the training through group settings such as workshops, seminars, or college courses. It describes training techniques, logistics, facilitating group training sessions, and methods for evaluating training. A sample outline is provided for leading a series of group training sessions on Module 10, Guidance.

Chapter V, Assessing Each Teacher's Progress, offers guidance on administering and conducting the knowledge and competency assessments, and scoring and discussing the results. The knowledge assessments and competency assessment observation forms are at the end of this chapter.

The appendices include:

A. Planning Form for Group Training Sessions, used by trainers in group settings;

B. Answer Sheets for Knowledge Assessments, used to score knowledge assessments;

C. Tracking Forms to monitor individual and program progress;

D. Training Record to document what, when, how, and by whom training is provided;

E. Certificate of Completion, awarded to teachers who complete the training program; and

F. Publishers and Distributors of Resources, as described in the Orientation to *Caring for Preschool Children.*

Chapter I

A Context for Staff Development—Making Training Count

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Chapter I

A Context for Staff Development—Making Training Count

This chapter describes:

- The importance of ensuring that training is part of an organized system
- The components of an organized system of professional development
- Linking training to professional development and program improvement

Caring for Preschool Children is one in a series of comprehensive, competency-based training programs for center-based staff and family child care providers working with children from birth through school age. The training program includes this *Trainer's Guide* and a two-volume set for teachers. Your decision to use *Caring for Preschool Children* represents a commitment to the professional development of one or more individuals who work with children three to five years old in a center-based setting. This commitment requires more than simply selecting a high-quality training program.

Effective training experiences exist within a context. Just as curriculum for young children is not simply a collection of activities, a series of workshops alone do not lead to professional growth. The training you provide using *Caring for Preschool Children* must fit into a well-established system of professional development.

The Need for an Organized System

Early childhood education, as defined by the National Association for Early Childhood Education (NAEYC), includes: "any part- or full-day group program in a center, school, or home that serves children from birth through age eight, including children with special developmental and learning needs."[1]

The field of early childhood education is broad and allows for multiple entry points. Some members of our field enter from colleges and graduate schools with advanced degrees in teaching. Some begin preparing in high school vocational programs. Still others enter the field with no professional preparation and gain professional knowledge and skills entirely on the job. The early childhood field, therefore, includes a diversity of roles in a variety of settings and must accommodate many different kinds of preparation.

As a result, many individuals working in early childhood settings do not have a recognized credential or degree. The likelihood exists that this number will increase as Head Start expands and the need for full-time child care increases. For this reason, individuals representing a range of organizations are coming together to design comprehensive professional development systems.

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[1] "NAEYC Position Statement: A Conceptual Framework for Early Childhood Professional Development," *Young Children* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, November, 1994).

In 1988, only one state, Delaware, was involved in a concerted effort to create a state-wide career development system. By 1996, the number of states involved in similar initiatives rose to 47.[2] This remarkable increase represents a growing awareness of the diversity of our field and consensus on the components that must be in place in order to achieve a comprehensive career development system. It further demonstrates that professional development takes place when teachers participate in an organized, high-quality system which focuses on the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge, leads to a certificate or credit towards a degree, and results in improved compensation and benefits.

Components of a Professional Development System

Leading organizations in early childhood education, including NAEYC, the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, and the National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force (NCECW) helped to identify the components of a professional development system. These organizations are also providing technical assistance and resources to state groups as they design their own systems.

As you consider how to use *Caring for Preschool Children* in your work, you'll need to make sure that all training experiences fit into a career development plan for each teacher who participates. Take the time to learn about the system that is being established in your state, as well as what is happening on a national level. Hopefully you will find that several key components of an organized professional development system are in place. These components are described below.

Agreement on a Core Body of Knowledge and Competencies

Every profession defines a specialized body of knowledge and competencies that are expected of all members of that profession. Training experiences—regardless of where they take place—should address the core curriculum that defines the early childhood profession.

In designing systems of professional development, most states have adopted or based their core curriculum on the eight competency areas outlined by The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. This core body of knowledge and competencies recognizes that effective teachers of young children:

- demonstrate an understanding of child development and can apply this knowledge in practice;
- observe and assess children's behavior in planning and individualizing teaching practices and curriculum;
- establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children;
- plan and implement developmentally appropriate curriculum that advances all areas of children's learning and development, including social, emotional, intellectual, and physical competence;

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[2] Azer, Sheri L., Karen L. Caprano, and Kimberly A. Elliott. *Working Toward Making a Career of It: A Profile of Career Development Initiatives in 1996* (The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education, Wheelock College, Boston, MA, 1996).

- establish supportive relationships with children and implement developmentally appropriate techniques of guidance and group management;
- establish and maintain positive and productive relationships with families;
- support the development and learning of individual children, recognizing that children are best understood in the context of family, culture, and society; and
- demonstrate an understanding of the early childhood profession and make a commitment to professionalism.

These eight competencies provide a blueprint for individual professional development and a way to assess progress. They serve as the content for all training experiences. *Caring for Preschool Children* addresses all of these competencies by organizing content around the 13 functional areas as defined by The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition.

A Training Approval System

A second component of a comprehensive system of professional development is a training approval system to ensure that all training experiences meet quality standards and lead to professional development. A training approval system should include procedures for reviewing and recognizing workshops and conferences as eligible for continuing education units and college or graduate credit; categorizing college courses in terms of their relevance to licensing requirements and credentialing programs; and ensuring that training experiences meet requirements for specific training levels and topic areas.

In developing a training approval system, many states have found it helpful to follow a set of principles of effective professional development. As defined by NAEYC,[3] effective professional development experiences:

- are part of an ongoing process allowing staff to continually incorporate and apply new knowledge and skills related to working with children and families;
- are grounded in a sound theoretical and philosophical base and structured as a coherent and systematic program;
- are responsive to an individual's background, experiences, and current role;
- allow staff to see clear linkages between theory and practice;
- use interactive, hands-on approaches that encourage staff to learn from one another;
- contribute to positive self-esteem by acknowledging the skills and resources staff bring to the training process;

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[3] "NAEYC Position Statement: A Conceptual Framework for Early Childhood Professional Development," *Young Children* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, November, 1994).

- provide opportunities for application and reflection and allow staff to be observed and receive feedback about what they have learned; and
- encourage staff to take responsibility for planning their own professional development program.

The training approach used in *Caring for Preschool Children* reflects and builds on these principles.

Many states are establishing criteria for individuals who offer training as part of the career development system. This criteria may include evidence of the following:

- knowledge, education, and experience in early childhood education and child development, including areas of specialization such as special needs, which qualify them to teach the content of the class;
- knowledge of how adults learn, including demonstrated sensitivity to individual differences and learning styles;
- sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity and to one's own cultural biases;
- understanding of the early childhood profession and a commitment to professionalism; and
- knowledge of state and local regulations and requirements for programs and staff.

Organizations that offer training for staff—child care agencies, Head Start programs, resource and referral agencies, Child and Adult Care Food Programs, Departments of Recreation, colleges, universities, schools—may also be required to meet criteria established by the state. Such criteria may include ensuring that all their trainers meet established qualifications, that training offered meets the requirements for licensing, certification, credentialing, or a degree in early childhood education, and that the content of training is based on accepted theories and practices in early childhood education and addresses the core competencies identified by the early childhood profession. Additionally, organizations must set up a system for documenting the training provided (e.g., transcripts, certificates of attendance) and maintain a permanent record of attendance at these sessions.

A Personnel Registry

A third essential component of a professional development system is a centralized tracking system to document all training completed by every individual in the profession. Documentation of training can include official transcripts from a college or university, a certificate of participation from an organization providing training which is signed by the trainer or a representative from the sponsoring group, or an official form provided at a conference or training session, with appropriate safeguards to ensure validation of each person's participation. Forms used for documentation, such as those included in Appendix D of this *Trainer's Guide*, become part of the individual's permanent record. Documentation must include the following information:

- the participant's name;
- the title of the workshop, course, or seminar, and the competency area addressed; date(s) of training;
- total number of hours of training completed, including designation of clock hours or credit hours (and the number of clock hours which constitute one credit hour); and
- signature or stamp of instructor or program administrator.

A permanent registry for training records is essential to achieving the goal of professional development for several reasons. Many states have staff training requirements built into licensing requirements. Centers must keep these records but they should also be maintained in a centralized place. A number of colleges and universities are considering ways to arrange college credit for training experiences being offered by certified trainers that address the profession's standards but are not part of the regular college program. Full documentation of these training experiences will be essential for career development.

Linking Training to Professional Development and Program Improvement

In the past several years, an increasing body of research has identified a link between training, program quality, and positive outcomes for children. The National Child Care Staffing Study suggests that accredited centers provide higher-than-average-quality services. "The accredited centers had better-compensated teachers with more formal education and specialized early childhood training, provided better benefits and working conditions, and maintained lower rates of turnover."[4]

As described above, tremendous progress has been made in designing the kind of comprehensive systems that are needed to enhance the quality of programs serving young children and in promoting the professional development of those who work in these programs. However, most state regulations still fall far short of ensuring that programs meet standards of quality that all children need to thrive. Welfare reform poses new challenges to our profession as some states consider lowering standards for programs and staff qualifications in order to expand child care services.

Caring for Preschool Children can be an effective tool for promoting professional growth and program improvement. The 13 modules in the training program can be applied to obtaining a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or program accreditation as described below.

A CDA Credential: The First Step in Professional Development

The Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program is a major effort to provide early childhood educators with a credential based on demonstrated competency. The program began in 1971 with the goal of improving the quality of early childhood education by improving, evaluating, and recognizing the competence of individuals who work with children from birth to age five in center-based and family child care settings.

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[4] Whitebrook, M., "NAEYC Accreditation As an Indicator of Program Quality: What Research Tells Us," *NAEYC Accreditation: A Decade of Learning and the Years Ahead,* S. Bredekamp and B. Willer, Editors (Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1996), p. 35.

The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition establishes the policies and sets the standards for the credentialing program and awards the CDA Credential. The Council awards a CDA Credential to teachers and family child care providers who demonstrate competence in caring for young children. To date, nearly 85,000 early care and education workers have received a CDA Credential.

There are two routes to obtaining a CDA Credential: Direct Assessment and the Professional Preparation Program. To apply through Direct Assessment, a Candidate must document completion of 120 contact hours of training with no less than ten hours in each of the eight subject areas defined by the profession. Formal training can be provided by training specialists, Head Start or child care agencies, colleges, vocational/technical schools, or resource and referral agencies, and must cover the specific subject areas outlined by the Council. Completion of the 13 modules in *Caring for Preschool Children* will enable teachers to meet or exceed the Council's training requirements. (A sample form for documenting contact hours can be found in Appendix D.)

Teachers applying for a Credential are responsible for developing a Professional Resource File, which is a collection of documents to use in working with children and families. The learning activities in *Caring for Preschool Children* include many opportunities for teachers to document work and collect materials that can be included in their Professional Resource File.

Direct Assessment also requires teachers to complete a written and oral assessment and be observed working directly with children. The knowledge and competency assessments used after completing each module will help teachers prepare for the CDA assessments.

In the second route to obtaining a CDA Credential, the Council will arrange for teachers to enter a college-level Professional Preparation Program, which offers training and assessment using the Council's curriculum, *Essentials*. There are three phases in the CDA Professional Preparation Program: field work, instructional course work, and evaluation.

To keep up-to-date on the process for obtaining a CDA Credential, contact The Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition at (800) 424-4310.

Program Improvement Through Accreditation

Program accreditation is a voluntary approach for recognizing and promoting high-quality programs serving young children. The accreditation process can be a powerful motivator for everyone working at the site to come together and work towards program improvement.

Accreditation begins with an extensive self-study process focusing on established criteria. All program staff and parents complete forms to evaluate the program and identify areas where improvement is needed. Many of the trainers and directors who use *Caring for Preschool Children* review the results of this self-assessment process when selecting the modules to introduce first to teachers. For example, if a program does not meet the standards for ensuring children's health, all teachers can begin with Module 2, Healthy, and discuss each learning activity as a group.

When program staff feel they have met the criteria, the accrediting organization sets up a site-visit from a validator who verifies the accuracy of the program's self-assessment. The validated self-assessment is reviewed by a commission or board which has the power to grant accreditation for a specified period of years, or to defer accreditation and make recommendations on areas that must be improved first. Three national systems now exist for center-based programs.[5]

The National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of NAEYC, administers a national, voluntary, professionally sponsored accreditation system for all types of preschools, kindergartens, child care centers, and school-age child care programs. Since 1985, approximately 4,500 programs in all fifty states have achieved NAEYC accreditation and an additional 8,000 programs are in the self-study process.

National Academy of Early Childhood Programs/NAEYC
1509 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036 (202) 232-8777 or (800) 424-2460

The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) is an independent voluntary accreditation program developed with the National Child Care Association, the largest organization of proprietary child care professionals. Since 1992, the NECPA has accredited 44 centers in ten states.

The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission
1023 Railroad Street
Conyers, GA (800) 543-7161

National Accreditation Council for Early Childhood Professional Personnel and Programs is a national, non-profit organization that supports private and ecumenical, licensed, center-based early childhood programs. The organization is sponsored by the Child Care Institute of America. Since 1992, the Council has accredited 80 programs in five states.

The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation
Cleveland Park Station
PO Box 9518
Washington, DC 20016-9518

Using the Training Program in College Courses

Caring for Preschool Children is used as the text for a range of courses offered through community colleges and four-year institutions. The chart on the following page shows how the modules might be grouped into a series of courses. This model is based on 12 credit hours that would lead to fulfillment of the requirements for a credential, accreditation, or college credit towards a degree. Another way that colleges might award credit is to offer a series of one-credit-hour classes based on the modules, thus giving teachers a range of choices for augmenting their training experiences. See Chapter IV, Leading Group Training Sessions, for additional guidance on adapting the training approach for group settings.

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[5] Stoney Associates, "Accreditation as a Quality Improvement Strategy" in *Building and Maintaining an Effective Child Care/Early Education System in Your State*, A collection of issue briefs by national organizations whose major focus is on early education/child care issues, 1996, pp. 20-22.

Using *Caring for Preschool Children* for Professional Development and Program Improvement

Course Title	*Caring for Preschool Children* Modules	Clock Hours	CDA Subject Areas Addressed	Center Accreditation
Establishing the Environment	1-Safe 2-Healthy 3-Learning Environment	12 12 14	Planning a safe, healthy, learning environment	Safety, Health, Nutrition, Physical Environment
Child Growth and Development: Cognitive and Physical	4-Physical 5-Cognitive 6-Communication 7-Creative	10 10 10 10	Steps to advance children's physical and intellectual development Principles of child growth and development	Curriculum, Interactions among Staff and Children
Child Growth and Development: Social and Emotional	8-Self 9-Social 10-Guidance	11 11 16	Positive ways to support children's social and emotional development Principles of child growth and development	Interactions among Staff and Children
Introduction to the Early Childhood Profession	11-Families 12-Program Management 13-Professionalism	10 20 10	Strategies to establish productive relationships with families Strategies to manage an effective program operation Maintaining a commitment to professionalism Observing and recording children's behavior	Staff-Parent Interaction, Staff Qualifications and Development, Evaluation, Administration
Applied Early Childhood Practices (Lab or Practicum)	This course would include observations of each student's application of material presented in class and provide individualized support and feedback.	16	Observations by an Advisor are part of the CDA credentialing process.	Site validator visit

Chapter II

An Overview of Caring for Preschool Children

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Chapter II

An Overview of Caring for Preschool Children

This chapter describes:

- The training materials
- The content of the training
- The training approach

The Training Materials

Caring for Preschool Children is comprised of 13 modules in a two-volume set. Volume I includes the Orientation and Modules 1 through 6; Volume II contains Modules 7 through 13. The Orientation provides a summary of the training content and process, a glossary of professional terms, definitions of the 13 functional areas of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards, and a bibliography of recommended resources for early childhood professionals. The Orientation ends with a self-assessment, which lists for each module, three major skills used by competent teachers. Teachers use the results of the self-assessment to develop a module completion plan. This plan lists the first three modules the teacher plans to work on with target completion dates, and a tentative schedule for completing the entire training program.

Each module is organized in the same way. The **overview** introduces the topics and major skills to be addressed in the module, provides concrete examples of teachers applying these skills, and allows teachers to relate the topic to personal experiences. A **pre-training assessment** lists specific skills competent teachers should possess in each area. Five to six **learning activities** follow. Each learning activity has several pages of text, followed by instructions for teachers to apply the information to their work with children and families. At the end of each module comes **summarizing your progress**, an opportunity to reflect on learning and skill development, **answer sheets**, and a **glossary**. The chart that follows outlines the organizational framework used for each module.

How Each Module Is Organized

Section	Description
Overview	An introduction to the topics addressed in the module and definition of three major skills teachers must have An opportunity to relate the topic to personal experiences (e.g., Your Own Safety)
Pre-Training Assessment	A checklist of the relevant skills used by competent teachers
Learning Activities (5 to 6 per module)	Information about a specific topic and an opportunity to apply knowledge while working with children and families
Summarizing Your Progress	A format for reviewing the knowledge and skills gained by completing all of the learning activities in the module
Answer Sheets	Suggested responses to learning activities
Glossary	Definitions of the terms used in the module

The Training Content

Caring for Preschool Children is designed so that teachers can gain the knowledge and skills needed to plan and implement developmentally appropriate programs for children ages 3 through 5. We use the term "teachers" to include classroom teachers and assistants, college students, volunteers, and others who work with preschool children and families in child development programs such as Head Start, and in private and public child care centers.

The content of the training program focuses on the 13 functional areas of the CDA Competency Standards. Each module addresses the knowledge and skills related to a functional area: Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment, Physical, Cognitive, Communication, Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families, Program Management, and Professionalism. (See the Orientation in *Caring for Preschool Children* for definitions of each functional area.)

The following skills and concepts are repeated and reinforced throughout the modules.

- **Competent teachers can apply their knowledge of child development.** They use what they know about preschool children to plan for each child and for the group. The first learning activity in Modules 1 through 10 summarizes the typical characteristics of preschool children and describes how they are related to the topics addressed in the module. In addition, many learning activities include information about child development and opportunities to apply this knowledge on the job.

- **Competent teachers establish strong partnerships with families.** This training program acknowledges parents as the prime educators of their children. In addition to completing Module 11, Families, teachers involve families as they carry out and discuss learning activities in other modules. The modules emphasize the importance of reflecting ethnicity, cultures, languages, and families in all aspects of the program.
- **Competent teachers conduct systematic, objective observations.** Observations allow teachers to learn about each child, measure children's progress, and evaluate program effectiveness. Information gathered through regular, systematic observations helps teachers learn about each child's needs, skills, interests, and individual characteristics. This information is shared with families and is used to plan for the group and for individual children.
- **Competent teachers offer an individualized program.** This topic is addressed in depth in Module 12, Program Management. In addition, it is reinforced through many learning activities. Teachers observe individual children and report on what they learn about each child. They use what they have learned to make decisions about introducing new materials, rearranging the environment, tailoring their interactions, or sharing information with families.
- **Competent teachers take time to reflect on their practices.** Reflection is an important part of most learning activities. Teachers plan, implement, then report on and evaluate what took place. They describe how they might change an activity if offered again, what materials they could provide to help a child gain specific skills, what props to offer that could enhance children's play, or ways to make the environment safer for children.

The Training Approach

The training approach combines self-instruction with support and feedback from a trainer. We use the term "trainer" to refer to a center director, mentor teacher, college instructor, or any other individual who can observe teachers, provide feedback on their performance, and guide their continued learning and professional development. Trainers introduce the program to teachers and offer ongoing guidance and support. Teachers apply new information immediately while working with children. As a result, teachers can see how their professional development affects children and contributes to overall program improvement efforts.

Throughout the training process, trainers observe teachers as they work with children and provide feedback and support during one-on-one and group training sessions. They address individual learning styles by offering additional resources and approaches and by suggesting strategies for extending learning. As teachers complete each module, trainers assess their knowledge and competence and track their progress.

Key Features

The training approach incorporates several key features that are critical to its success.

Training is individualized. *Caring for Preschool Children* can be used by new or experienced teachers to increase their knowledge and understanding of preschool children and developmentally appropriate practice. The self-assessment and pre-training assessments are designed to acknowledge and build on each teacher's existing skills and knowledge. The module completion plan allows teachers and trainers to determine individual schedules for completing the modules. The learning activities invite teachers to make choices—which child to observe, which activity to plan and implement, when to use a checklist, what part of the environment to assess and improve. Teachers are encouraged to use critical thinking and reflect on their own performance. They participate in the process of determining whether they are ready for the assessment process.

Teachers receive ongoing feedback based on regular, systematic observations. While much of the training involves self-instruction, the role of the trainer is critical to application of knowledge. Trainers observe teachers working with children, give feedback based on these observations, model appropriate practices, and discuss completed learning activities.

The training involves hands-on learning. Most of the learning activities require teachers to develop skills while applying knowledge on the job. Teachers develop, implement, and evaluate plans with colleagues. They develop partnerships with families, use observation notes to individualize their programs, and complete checklists to identify and address problems.

The training is competency-based. Knowledge and competency assessments are built into the training process. The assessments acknowledge each teacher's growth and learning and provide a sense of closure before beginning the next module.

Motivating Adult Learners

The training design and approach for *Caring for Preschool Children* reflects an understanding of adult learning principles. Most adults are self-directed and want to be responsible for their own learning. How much they get out of training depends on how important the content is to them, how much effort they put into the learning process, and whether they integrate and use what they learn. Trainers need to consider what motivates adults to learn and how principles of adult learning theory can be applied to training.

For most adults, motivation for learning is closely related to whether they can **immediately apply the knowledge and skills being addressed.** They want to know what they will be learning so they can determine whether it is useful. This training program defines clear objectives in the self-assessment, the pre-training assessments, and at the beginning of each learning activity, so teachers can clearly see what they will be learning and how it relates to their work with children.

Adults view job-related learning as a means to an end, not an end in itself. They are motivated to participate in training that allows them to **develop or improve specific job-related skills**. The learning activities in *Caring for Preschool Children* address this motivator because they are completed on the job.

Time is a limited and valuable investment for working adults. They have more positive attitudes towards training when they believe the **time invested is well-spent**. The knowledge and skills gained through this training program will help teachers become more effective in their work with children. Trainers can reinforce this motivator by pointing out to teachers how their increased skills and knowledge are benefiting children.

Strong secondary factors relating to an adult's motivation to learn are to **increase their self-esteem and enjoyment of work**. This training program acknowledges and builds on what teachers already know. It includes opportunities for teachers to feel successful and competent as they complete learning activities, modules, and the assessment process. Teachers who know they are competent tend to enjoy their work and want to continue learning.

According to many studies, motivation increases with **recognition for achievements, respect for the individual as a person,** and **participation in planning and decision making**. The assessment process in *Caring for Preschool Children* provides recognition for accomplishments. The self-paced, individualized approach demonstrates respect for each person's unique training needs and strengths. There are many opportunities for teachers to plan and make decisions about their learning. The greatest motivation, however, is to tie training and demonstration of competence to salary increases.

Applying the Principles of Adult Learning Theory

Adults bring a **wealth of previous experiences** to training. They find training more meaningful when their life experiences are recognized and they can relate the content to their own lives. For example, in each module the overview includes an opportunity for teachers to relate the content to their own lives and the pre-training assessment allows them to rate their own skills.

Adults need **opportunities to integrate new ideas with what they already know** so they can use the new information. Training should provide opportunities to make interpretations and draw conclusions. Many learning activities require teachers to answer questions about why they planned a specific activity, how children reacted, what they might do differently in the future, or how they can build on what they learned through the experience.

Adults **acquire conceptually new information more slowly** than information that relates to something they already know. The self-paced nature of this training program allows enough time for teachers to learn and apply new concepts. In addition, because some learning activities build on previous ones, new concepts are repeated and reinforced.

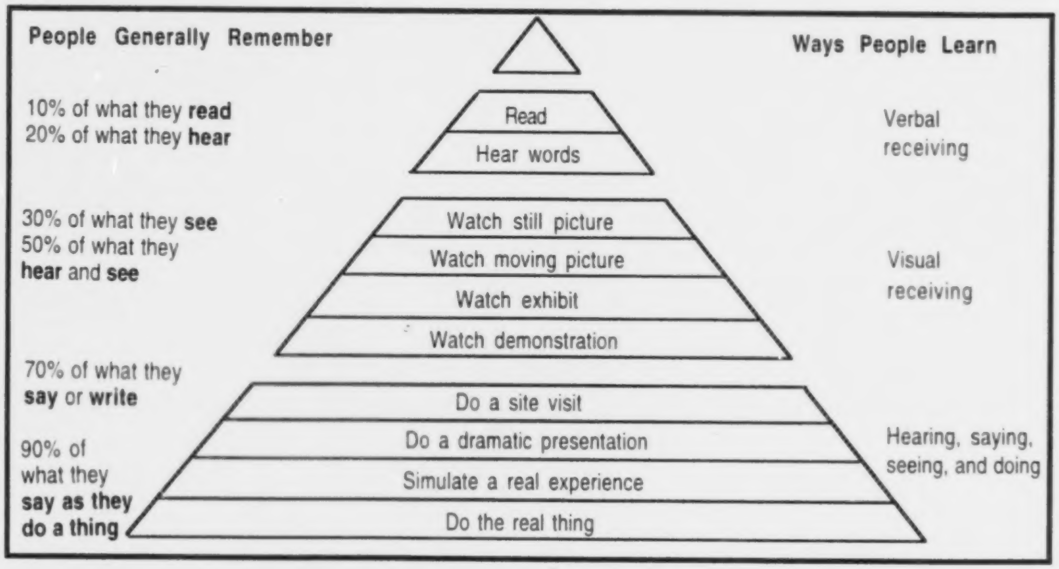
Adults tend to **acquire information even more slowly when it conflicts with what they already know**, because it forces them to re-evaluate their knowledge base. The trainer's feedback conferences with teachers can serve as opportunities to discuss and evaluate new knowledge.

Adults tend to **take errors personally** and some find it **difficult to take risks**. This training program encourages reflection, critical thinking, and skill development rather than focusing on "right" or "wrong" answers. Teachers are encouraged to use answer sheets as guides for learning, rather than view them as the only correct responses.

Adults **perceive their own experiences as unique and private**. They are not always comfortable or willing to share these experiences with others. Each teacher receives a copy of *Caring for Preschool Children*, which can serve as a personal journal of that individual's professional development. Trainers need to respect teachers' privacy while offering encouragement.

Research has shown that many adults learn best through a hands-on approach that actively involves them in the learning process. Edgar Dale explains this theory schematically in his "Cone of Experience," which follows.

Edgar Dale's Cone of Experience[*]


People Generally Remember
Ways People Learn
10% of what they read
20% of what they hear
Read
Hear words
Verbal receiving
30% of what they see
50% of what they hear and see
Watch still picture
Watch moving picture
Watch exhibit
Watch demonstration
Visual receiving
70% of what they say or write
90% of what they say as they do a thing
Do a site visit
Do a dramatic presentation
Simulate a real experience
Do the real thing
Hearing, saying, seeing, and doing

As noted earlier, the learning activities in *Caring for Preschool Children* are hands-on as they ask teachers to apply what they are learning. In addition to providing feedback after teachers have completed learning activities, trainers can plan their schedules to include time to observe teachers carrying out the activities.

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[*] Based on Edgar Dale, *Audiovisual Methods in Teaching*; 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 107.

Applying Adult Learning Principles to the Training

Principles of Adult Learning	What Trainers Can Do
Adults bring a wealth of experiences to training.	Use the overview and pre-training assessments to acknowledge what teachers already know.
Adults need time to integrate what they already know with new information.	Encourage teachers to reflect on their learning.
Adults need extra time to understand new information that doesn't relate to what they already know.	Respect the self-paced training approach so teachers can take as much time as they need to internalize new information.
Adults need even more time to integrate new information that conflicts with what they know.	Use feedback conferences to discuss and evaluate "new" and "old" knowledge.
Adults tend to take errors personally and some have difficulty taking risks.	Emphasize reflection and critical thinking rather than "right" or "wrong" answers.
Adults perceive their own experiences as unique and private.	Provide individual copies of training materials and respect each person's privacy while offering support and encouragement.
Adults learn best through a hands-on approach.	Observe teachers doing learning activities.

Chapter III

Overseeing the Training Program

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Chapter III

Overseeing the Training Program

This chapter describes:

- Introducing the training program
- Completing the Orientation
- Completing a module
- Providing feedback
- Designing your own strategy for implementing a program
- Using the training materials in a mentoring program
- What teachers and trainers do to complete each module

Introducing the Training Program

When a program decides to implement *Caring for Preschool Children,* all teachers may not begin the training at the same time. Nevertheless, it is important for everyone to understand the value of the program and have a general understanding of the training content and process. You might hold a meeting to introduce the training program, explaining that it is part of the program's professional development and program improvement plans. Once the training program is fully implemented, you can meet with new teachers to provide an individualized overview of the training. A suggested agenda for either a group or individual introduction to *Caring for Preschool Children* follows.

A. Introduction

Use the Orientation in Volume I of *Caring for Preschool Children* and this *Trainer's Guide* to review the following topics and others specific to your situation.

- How the training meets the characteristics and circumstances of preschool teachers and programs.
- The content and organization of the training modules.
- The training approach—what teachers do and what the trainer does.
- Benefits to teachers, children, and families.
- The assessment process.
- Documentation of progress.

Display key points on overhead transparencies or chart paper and provide copies of *Caring for Preschool Children* so teachers can become familiar with its content and organization.

B. Discuss the Content and Training Approach

Ask teachers which topics and skills they would most like to learn about and in what order. Because *Caring for Preschool Children* is very comprehensive, you can demonstrate how these training requests are addressed in the modules.

Ask teachers to describe strategies that help them gain knowledge and skills. Teachers are likely to mention approaches such as observation and feedback by trainers, supervisors, or colleagues; viewing videotapes; reading books or articles; watching someone else perform a task; and discussing an idea or concept. Give specific examples that show how the *Caring for Preschool Children* training approach incorporates these strategies.

C. Provide an Overview of Observation and Recording

Explain that observation is a tool that teachers will use to complete many of the learning activities in this training program and throughout their early childhood professions. If appropriate, devote a block of time to review and practice the skills used to conduct and record systematic, objective, accurate and complete observations. You can use learning activity I, Using a Systematic Approach to Observing and Recording in Module 12, Program Management, as a resource.

Note that you will also conduct observations of teachers throughout the training program to learn more about each individual's involvement and interactions with children. You will use your observation notes as the basis for providing objective feedback to teachers on their progress in applying the knowledge and skills and to conduct the competency assessments.

D. Explain Your Plan for Conducting Feedback Conferences

Describe how the training program is tailored to each individual's needs, and also provides for a close working relationship between trainer and teacher. Emphasize that although teachers use use the materials independently, they are not left alone to sink or swim. Regular feedback is an integral part of the training process. Describe the purpose and frequency of feedback conferences and the approach (one-on-one, teaching teams, or group) you plan to use.

If you will be conducting group feedback meetings, explain that these are opportunities for teachers to discuss the learning activities and to support each other. Peer support can encourage teachers as they work with children each day and contribute to their professional growth.

E. Introduce the Individual Tracking Form

Distribute and review the individual tracking form found in Appendix C. Encourage teachers to monitor their own progress. Note that there is space for the trainer to sign off when each module is completed.

F. Describe the Plan for Acknowledging Teachers' Accomplishments

Emphasize that the program will acknowledge teachers for undertaking and completing the training program. Describe the program's plan for offering incentives such as the following.

- Award increases in salaries and benefits for successfully completing different levels of training.
- Give meaningful rewards for completing a substantial part of the training. For example, offer a certificate for dinner for two donated by a local restaurant, a new material for the children, or a copy of a favorite resource.
- Organize and display scrapbooks or picture albums that introduce the teachers to parents interested in enrolling their children in the program. Show pictures that highlight individual teachers interacting with children. Write brief summaries of teachers' special interests and accomplishments.
- Hold recognition dinners and award ceremonies for teachers who have completed the program. Invite spouses, parents, and other special guests.
- Offer child care so a teacher and guest can spend an evening out. Teachers might volunteer their child care services to acknowledge a colleague's success.
- Provide special pins, tote bags, or framed certificates that are concrete symbols of a teacher's completion of part or all of the program.
- Post on a bulletin board or include in the program newsletter photographs of teachers who have undertaken or completed the program.

G. Closing

Summarize the session and answer questions. Communicate your excitement about working with the teachers who are starting the training program. Describe the logistical arrangements for distributing materials, completing the Orientation, and scheduling individual meetings.

Completing the Orientation

The first step in the training program is completing the Orientation. Teachers read about the training program content and process and review the glossary and definitions of the CDA functional areas. Before they begin the first module, teachers complete the self-assessment. This exercise introduces the major topics and skills covered in each module and helps teachers select three modules with which they want to begin.

Encourage teachers to complete the self-assessment as honestly as possible. Honest answers will allow teachers to identify their strengths, interests, and needs.

Discuss with the Trainer: After completing the self-assessment, teachers meet with their trainer to review the Orientation and discuss their responses to the self-assessment. Allow enough time—15 to 30 minutes—at this meeting to identify the teacher's strengths, interests, and needs, and to work with the teacher to develop a module completion plan. The plan lists the first three modules a teacher plans to work on, with target completion dates, and a tentative schedule for completing the entire training program. It takes four to six weeks to complete all the learning activities in a module. The entire training program takes 12 to 18 months.

In general, the module completion plan is based on the responses to the self-assessment and the trainer's observation notes of the teacher working with children. In addition, the module completion plan might take into account program-wide improvement goals, such as reducing accidents and injuries or creating more effective learning environments. In such cases, teachers would all complete the same module so they can gain the knowledge and skills needed to achieve the program's goal.

The module completion plan is individualized for each teacher. However, in some cases, where a consultant is providing feedback and support, the plan will have to reflect the trainer's schedule as well. Many trainers find it helpful to encourage several teachers to work on the same module at the same time. This is especially useful when first implementing the training program or when training is tied to program improvement goals and strategies. Coordinating training plans in this way enables you to conduct group feedback sessions during which teachers can learn from and provide support to their colleagues. Also, group sessions make supervising the program less time-consuming for the trainer. But keep in mind that some teachers may benefit from individualized feedback on modules in which their skills are less developed.

Completing a Module

Although the content and activities in the modules vary substantially, teachers and trainers follow the same process for completing each one. The process for completing each section of a module is described below and illustrated in the diagram on page 31.

Overview

Teachers read about the topics and three major skills addressed in the module. For each skill, they review concrete examples depicting teachers demonstrating their competence and a short situation illustrating teachers applying their skills. Teachers answer questions about each situation and compare their answers to those on the answer sheets at the end of the module. Next, teachers answer questions about how the topic relates to their own experiences, both on and off the job.

As each teacher begins the training program, try to schedule a one-hour observation of the individual working with children. ~~If~~ teachers seem uncomfortable with being observed, begin by conducting brief observations and immediately holding a feedback conference to share what you saw and heard. As teachers recognize the value of having an observer take objective notes on what takes place in the program, they are likely to become more comfortable with your presence and you can increase the length of the observation period.

Pre-Training Assessment

Teachers complete the pre-training assessment—a list of the skills described in the concrete examples depicting teachers demonstrating their competence—by indicating whether they do these things regularly, sometimes, or not enough. They review their responses and identify three to five skills they want to improve or topics they want to know learn more about. Teachers can refer to the glossary at the end of the module if they need definitions for the terms used.

Discuss with the Trainer: Teachers then meet with you to discuss their responses to the Overview and pre-training assessment. They then begin the learning activities for the module.

Learning Activities

Each module contains five to six learning activities. Teachers read several pages of information about the topic. Next, they apply their knowledge while working with children and families. For example, they might answer questions related to the reading and their own teaching practices; complete a checklist; try out suggestions from the reading and report on the results; plan, implement, and evaluate an activity; or observe and record children's behavior and interactions, then use the observation notes to individualize the program. Examples of completed forms, summaries, and charts are provided, when needed, to demonstrate how to do the activity.

Trainers offer ongoing support to teachers as they complete the learning activities. Support might include observations of the teacher implementing an activity, conducting a co-observation of a child, reviewing plans and assisting in collecting materials, or discussing and answering questions about the content.

Discuss with the Trainer: Teachers meet with the trainer after completing most learning activities. They discuss the content and report on what they did and what they learned. Trainers provide feedback based on observation notes and on the written portion of the learning activity—charts, checklists, plans, responses to questions, or observation summaries. For some activities, teachers meet with colleagues or a child's parents, or review answer sheets at the end of the module.

Summarizing Your Progress

After completing all of the learning activities, teachers take time to summarize their progress. They review their responses to the pre-training assessment and describe their increased knowledge and skills. For some modules, teachers also review and add to one of the learning activities.

Discuss with the Trainer: Teachers meet with their trainer to review their progress and to discuss whether they are ready for the knowledge and competency assessments. If teachers are ready for assessment, you can schedule a time to administer the knowledge assessment and conduct the competency assessment observation. If teachers need further training on the topics and skills addressed in the module, you can help them plan strategies for continuing to develop the necessary knowledge and skills.

For teachers who are having difficulty mastering the skills and knowledge in a module, or for those who want to learn more about a specific topic you might suggest other resources. Professional organizations and publishers offer numerous books, journals, videotapes, and training manuals related to caring for preschool children. The Orientation in Volume I of *Caring for Preschool Children* includes an extensive bibliography of resources for early childhood professionals.

Assessing Competence

There is a knowledge assessment for each module and a competency assessment for Modules 1 through 12. Chapter V of this *Trainer's Guide*, Assessing Each Teacher's Progress, describes the assessment process, offers guidance on administering, scoring, and discussing the results, and includes the knowledge assessments and competency assessment observation forms.

Documenting Progress

After teachers have successfully completed the learning activities and both assessments, they can record their progress on the Individual Tracking Form (included in Appendix C) and ask for the trainer's sign-off. Trainers use the Program Tracking Form (also in Appendix C) to document and monitor progress of a group of teachers who are working on the modules. Keeping this form up to date can help you schedule feedback sessions and assessments. The diagram on the next page illustrates the training process.

Providing Feedback

Whether provided one-on-one or during group sessions, the trainer's feedback to teachers is crucial to the success of *Caring for Preschool Children*. Feedback conferences are particularly important because of the self-instructional nature of the training program. These conferences give trainers regular contact with teachers. They are opportunities for trainers to answer questions, offer support, make suggestions, listen to concerns about progress, reinforce new skills, help teachers recognize how much they have learned, and encourage teachers to repeat activities they may have misunderstood the first time.

For each module, trainers provide feedback after teachers complete:

- the overview and pre-training assessment;
- most learning activities;
- the summarizing your progress section; and
- the knowledge and competency assessments.

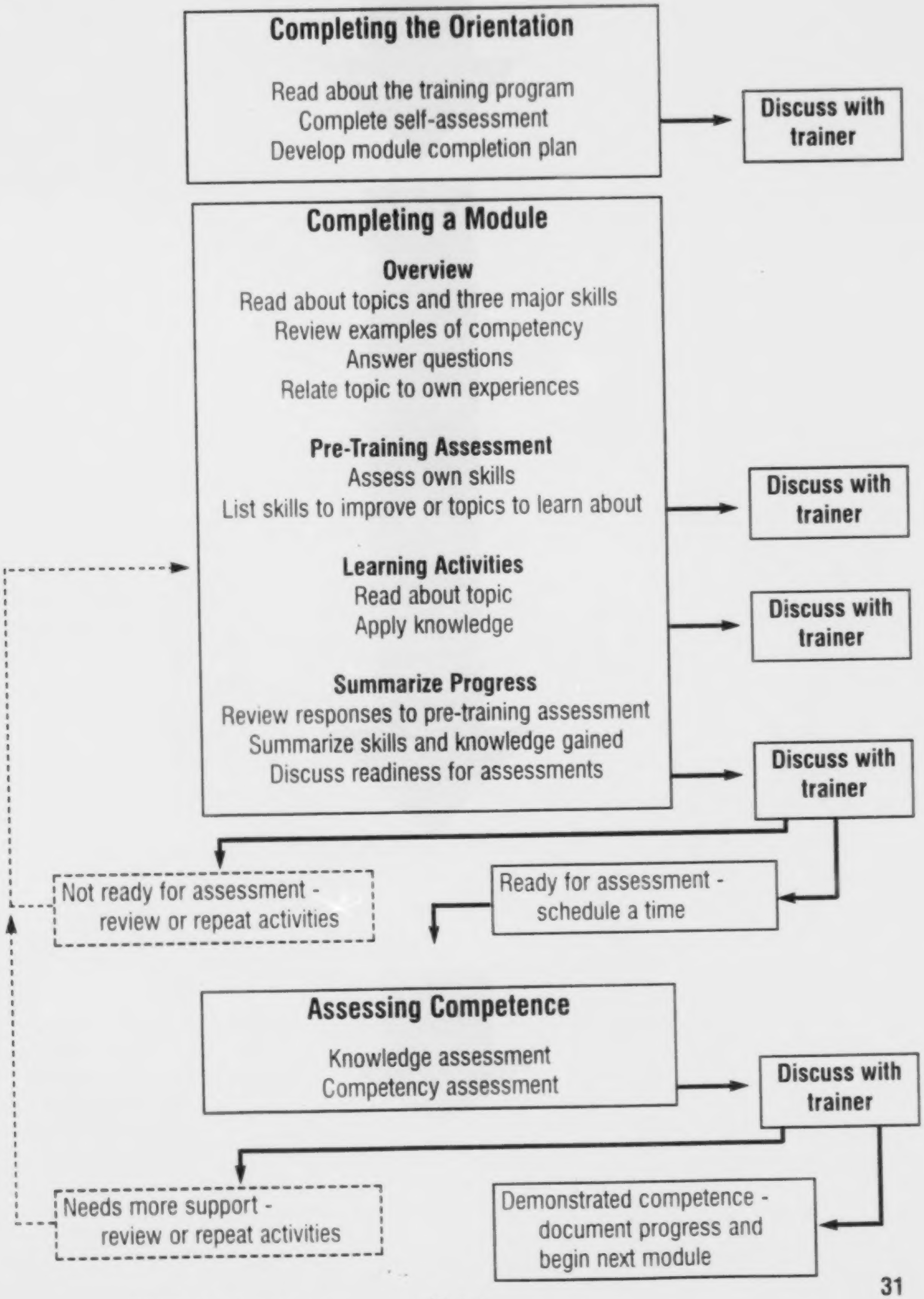
Feedback conferences may be as short as 10 minutes or may last longer, depending on how much feedback and support teachers need. Try to schedule feedback conferences for the learning activities before teachers begin the next ones. To make sure teachers have understood the content, it is always best to discuss responses that are still fresh in their minds. A full understanding of each activity is particularly important when the next learning activity builds on the knowledge and skills addressed in the previous one.

Encourage teachers to take the initiative in scheduling feedback conferences. You can post a schedule of times when you are free and encourage teachers to sign up when ready. When several teachers are working on the same module, the decision on when to meet should be a joint one, because everyone will have to be at the same point in the module at the time of the feedback conference.

Here are some suggestions for conducting one-on-one or group feedback sessions. You can adapt them to reflect your own training style and what you know about each teacher.

- **Review the written responses in each learning activity before the conference.** This is especially important when preparing to give feedback on inappropriate responses. Consider how to offer constructive comments that encourage teachers to try an activity again.
- **Begin with an open-ended question.** For example, "How did you feel about this activity?" or "What did you learn from this activity?" Take a few minutes to discuss each teacher's responses to the questions.

The Training Process


Completing the Orientation
Read about the training program
Complete self-assessment
Develop module completion plan
Discuss with trainer
Completing a Module
Overview
Read about topics and three major skills
Review examples of competency
Answer questions
Relate topic to own experiences
Pre-Training Assessment
Assess own skills
List skills to improve or topics to learn about
Discuss with trainer
Learning Activities
Read about topic
Apply knowledge
Discuss with trainer
Summarize Progress
Review responses to pre-training assessment
Summarize skills and knowledge gained
Discuss readiness for assessments
Discuss with trainer
Not ready for assessment - review or repeat activities
Ready for assessment - schedule a time
Assessing Competence
Knowledge assessment
Competency assessment
Discuss with trainer
Needs more support - review or repeat activities
Demonstrated competence - document progress and begin next module

- **Use specific examples to acknowledge appropriate responses.** For example: "The way you phrased that showed your respect for Karl. You told him clearly what you expected, but you were careful to show him you understood his feelings."

- **Relate teachers' responses to information in the text.** For example: "Your responses show that you understand how to use the suggested strategies for handling challenging behaviors and why they are appropriate."

- **Ask questions about inappropriate responses.** Instead of simply correcting them, help the teacher think about why a response is inappropriate and what effect it might have on a child. For example:

  "What do you think are the reasons for LaShonda's behavior?"

  "How could you involve the children in this routine?"

  "What message would this statement give to the child?"

- **Help teachers arrive at more appropriate responses.** You might say:

  "Let's look back at the text. Perhaps there's another way to phrase this so it offers guidance without making the child feel discouraged."

The underlying goal of providing feedback is to improve a teacher's skills and knowledge. If a teacher has not understood the information presented in a learning activity, use the feedback conference to review and explain the information and promote understanding. Specific strategies for extending learning are provided at the end of this chapter.

Designing Your Own Strategy for Implementing the Training

This chapter has described one approach to implementing *Caring for Preschool Children*. Many programs choose to tailor this approach so that it fits the needs and circumstances of their teachers and trainers. The training materials to be flexible enough are used to meet a variety of goals. Here are some examples:

- **Observation Training:** At the start of each year, all teachers attend a workshop on observation skills which is based on the learning activities in Module 12, Program Management. This is an opportunity for experienced teachers to brush up on observation and for new teachers to develop this important skill. Throughout the year teachers use observation skills to complete learning activities and as a regular part of their work.

- **Orientation Training:** When new teachers are hired by the program they complete the overview sections of selected modules to help them to begin gaining the knowledge and skills needed to care for preschool children. Later, new teachers go back and complete the Orientation in Volume I, develop individual module completion plans, and begin working on the modules.

- **Program Improvement Efforts:** After reviewing the results of a comprehensive program assessment, the trainer and teachers focus on those modules that are directly tied to identified weaknesses. For example, all teachers work on the Families module because the assessment showed that the program was not offering a variety of parent involvement options.

When designing a strategy for tailoring the training materials to address program needs, it helps to develop a training plan. Your plan should address the principles of adult learning and answer the following questions:

- What are the goals for the training? What specific needs will it meet?
- What skills and knowledge will be addressed?
- Where will the training take place?
- Who will participate in the training? How many teachers will take part? What are their levels of experience and knowledge?
- Who will serve as the trainer?
- How will the trainer provide ongoing support to participants?
- How will the trainer conduct regular observations of participants while they are working with children and share his or her observation notes?
- How will the trainer review and give participants feedback on their completed learning activities?
- How will the trainer administer and discuss the assessments?

Developing a training plan ensures that you will include the key features described in Chapter II: individualizing, providing ongoing feedback based on regular, systematic observations, incorporating hands-on learning, and assessing knowledge and competence.

Using the Training Materials in a Mentoring Program

Mentor teachers are experienced early childhood educators who give individualized support to teachers new to the profession. Generally, mentor teachers have sufficient teaching experience to be recognized for their expertise. They have knowledge of child development and developmentally appropriate practices and are skilled in planning for and interacting with children. Effective mentor teachers are skilled observers and effective communicators. They regularly reflect on their own behaviors and recognize the importance of being life-long learners. They guide teachers through the planning process, help them develop specific skills, and model appropriate practice.

Two features are critical to the success of mentoring programs. First, there should be a mechanism for mentors to get support from each other or a supervisor. Mentors need to discuss their experiences and teachers' reactions, problem solve, and share successes. In addition, it is important to include opportunities for teachers to give feedback to mentors during their regularly scheduled meetings and at periodic intervals, perhaps during meetings between the mentor teacher, teacher, and supervisor.

Mentor teachers can use *Caring for Preschool Children* as the framework and content for an organized mentoring program. While overseeing the training, mentor teachers can meet with teachers at regular, scheduled times; observe teachers working with children and families; model appropriate practices; review completed learning activities; give written and verbal feedback; answer teachers' questions; provide ongoing support; and administer and discuss assessments. While supporting the training process, mentor teachers can also serve as a key source of support for new teachers. Mentor teachers can answer questions and respond to new teachers' concerns, whether related to the training or other job-related issues. When new teachers receive ongoing support, they are more likely to remain on the job and become committed to long-term professional growth and development.

What Teachers and Trainers Do in Each Module

The following charts summarize what the teachers and trainers do in each section of the 13 modules. Individual teachers and trainers have different learning and interaction styles. Thus, these charts do not present hard-and-fast rules to be followed inflexibly. Rather, they summarize what teachers are asked to do and suggest constructive ways trainers can provide support. Each chart is followed by suggested strategies for extending learning in individual or group sessions.

Completing Module 1: Safe

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about safety and what teachers can do to keep children safe. Read examples of teachers keeping children safe and answer questions. Answer questions about a personal safety experience. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; personal safety experience and how this relates to keeping children safe; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Keep Children Safe	Read about ways teachers can promote safety while encouraging children's risk-taking behavior. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to keep children safe. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to help children take risks safely. Discuss examples listed on charts. Share their observations of instances teachers ensured children's safety. Encourage teachers to add to chart while working on the module.
II. Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment	Read about safety precautions and ways to create and maintain safe indoor and outdoor environments. Use indoor and outdoor checklists to assess safety conditions. List unsafe items and steps needed to improve safety. Discuss suggested improvements with colleagues and the trainer. Make and check off changes. With colleagues, develop a schedule for daily and monthly safety checks.	Review checklists and potential dangers identified. Help teachers plan ways to make the needed changes. Check back to ensure teachers made changes to improve safety conditions in the environment.

Module 1: Safe (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Handling Accidents and Emergencies	Read about responding to injuries, first aid procedures, and handling fires and other emergencies. Review program emergency and accident procedures and answer questions about how to respond to accidents and emergencies. Discuss answers with the trainer. If needed, review program's emergency procedures with supervisor.	Discuss answers to questions. Encourage teachers to review and practice emergency procedures on a regular basis. Provide additional resources and training on responding to accidents and emergencies, as needed.
IV. Ensuring Children's Safety Away from the Program	Read about safe practices for walks and field trips. Answer questions about program policies and procedures for walks and field trips. List safety precautions to add to those already used by program. Discuss answers with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss answers to questions. Encourage teachers to use simple, positive language when discussing ways to take safety precautions.
V. Helping Children Learn to Keep Themselves Safe	Read about helping children learn to keep themselves safe by modeling, explaining safety practices, and involving children in developing safety rules. Work with a small group of children to develop safety limits for an indoor and outdoor interest area. Answer questions about the process. Discuss responses with colleagues and the trainer.	Help teachers plan a safety discussion with children, if asked. If possible, observe teachers conducting the activity and provide feedback. Discuss responses to the questions.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Module 1: Safe (continued)

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Have teachers kneel on the floor to view the environment from the children's perspective. Discuss any potential hazards teachers discovered.
- Distribute information on and encourage teachers to attend safety training courses or workshops offered at the program, by local hospitals, or by national groups such as the Red Cross.
- Ask teachers to individualize the safety checklists to reflect their room arrangement, furnishings, materials, equipment, and outdoor areas.
- Encourage teachers to keep records of how they address potentially dangerous items and conditions they identify. This exercise will help teachers develop an awareness that maintaining a safe environment is an ongoing part of their jobs.
- Suggest that teachers obtain and share with parents safety publications from organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Ask the local Red Cross or fire department to provide training on how to respond during weather-related emergencies such as lightning storms, tornadoes, and earthquakes.
- Make a scrapbook highlighting teachers' actions that kept children safe in an emergency or crisis.
- Have teachers work with children to develop and post safety limits for each indoor and outdoor interest area.

Completing Module 2: Healthy

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about health, hygiene, nutrition, and child abuse and neglect and what teachers can do to keep children healthy. Read examples of situations in which teachers ensured children's health and answer questions. Answer questions about personal health and nutrition habits. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; personal health habits (if teachers wish to share them) and how they relate to keeping children healthy; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Maintaining a Hygienic Environment	Read about sanitary procedures such as using bleach solutions that reduce illness. Use a health and hygiene checklist to assess routines. List items that need improvement and improvement strategies. Discuss strategies with colleagues and the trainer. Make and check off needed changes.	Review completed checklists as well as items that need improvement. Meet with teachers and colleagues to discuss improvement strategies that will make the environment more hygienic. Suggest other items that might need improvement.
II. Responding When Children Are Sick	Read about daily health checks, signs of illnesses, symptoms of contagious diseases, administering medication, HIV, and lice. Review program's policies on sick children and contagious illnesses. Apply the policies in response to vignettes. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review responses to vignettes. Answer questions and discuss concerns about the transmission of contagious illnesses. Help teachers learn more about HIV and other illnesses and conditions that affect young children.

Module 2: Healthy (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Encouraging Good Nutrition	Read about the United States Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA/CACFP), family-style meals, and cooking with children. Plan, conduct, and report on a small group cooking activity. Discuss the cooking activity with the children's parents and the trainer. Offer parents suggestions for cooking with children at home.	Offer to help collect resources and ingredients for the cooking activity. If possible, observe teachers conducting the activity. Discuss activity summary. Help teachers plan ways to involve children in preparing and serving meals and snacks.
IV. Helping Children Learn Healthy Habits	Read about teaching children good health habits through routines, play, and activities. Describe a routine usually done without children. Plan and implement a strategy for including children in the routine. Report on what happened. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer. If appropriate, change the routine permanently.	Discuss with teachers how they changed their approach in carrying out one routine. Focus on the healthy habits children learn by actively participating in routines. Help teachers examine and make necessary changes to other routines so that children are involved as much as possible.
V. Recognizing the Signs of Possible Child Abuse and Neglect	Read the definitions and signs of different types of abuse and neglect. Also, read about picking up clues from families and the signs of child abuse or neglect in child care settings. Answer questions about child abuse and neglect. Review the answer sheet at the end of the module. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review the different types and signs of child abuse and neglect. Provide definitions and guidance on child abuse and neglect information from the program, and state and local jurisdictions. Review answers to the questions and compare to those provided at the end of the module.

Module 2: Healthy (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
VI. Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect	Read about state and local laws and policies for reporting child abuse and neglect. Use program's child abuse and neglect reporting procedures to complete chart listing key information. Read about overcoming barriers to reporting, getting ready to report, and what to do after a report is filed. Review a checklist for reporters. Answer questions about teachers' responsibilities for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. Review the answer sheet at the end of the module. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	If needed, provide a copy of the program's policy and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect. Emphasize that it is a teachers' responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect, and that they do not have to provide proof. Review answers to the questions and compare to those provided at the end of the module. Answer additional questions and help alleviate remaining concerns regarding reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Ask teachers to review and discuss the program's menus for snacks and meals. Recommend changes, if necessary, to ensure foods served to children meet USDA/CACFP guidelines.
- Suggest that teachers ask parents to share their favorite recipes from home. Provide materials so teachers can turn these into picture recipe cards.
- Maintain and share with teachers a file of recipes and plans for simple cooking activities. Encourage teachers to maintain their own files. Suggest that they take photographs of children during cooking activities and share with parents and colleagues.
- Serve healthy snacks at staff meetings and workshops. Discuss ways teachers can model good nutrition and hygiene practices, such as healthy eating habits and washing their hands before eating.
- Ask teachers to help you organize a collection of resources on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Work together to plan and implement family support activities at the program.
- Visit a program at meal or snack time so you can model strategies for relaxed, family-style dining—before, during, and after eating.
- Encourage teachers to meet regularly to discuss stresses that may be affecting children and families and to suggest strategies for offering assistance. Ask teachers to share their healthy approaches to dealing with stress, and encourage them to support each other on the job.

Completing Module 3: Learning Environment

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about what teachers can do to create and use effective indoor and outdoor learning environments. Read examples of situations in which teachers created and used learning environments for preschool children and answer questions. Answer questions about the effects of being in different kinds of environments. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers and learning environments. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; personal experiences in different environments and how this relates to creating appropriate learning environments; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Create a Learning Environment	Read about how preschool children actively explore the environment. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to create a learning environment. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to create environments that reflect and support children's development. Discuss examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children using the learning environment. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Conveying Positive Messages Through the Environment	Read about sending children positive messages through the environment. Complete chart describing how the environment conveys different messages and listing new ideas to try. Discuss ideas with colleagues, agree on changes to try, make changes, and record children's reactions. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review teachers' ideas and guide them to add others, if appropriate. Offer to help teachers get materials needed to make changes. Discuss how children reacted to changes.

Module 3: Learning Environment (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Establishing Interest Areas in the Classroom	Read about interest areas for preschool children. Identify and compare the strengths and weaknesses of two classroom arrangements. Draw their classroom floor plan. Draw a second plan with changes and additions based on the module. Discuss revised floor plans with colleagues and agree on changes. Record children's reactions to changes. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Compare the strengths and weaknesses of each floor plan. Discuss plans to improve the environment. If possible, meet with teachers and their colleagues to review proposed changes and encourage teamwork. Help teachers rearrange the environment according to their plans. Encourage teachers to observe children regularly for reactions to the environment and to determine when additional changes are needed.
IV. Selecting and Displaying Materials	Read about how to select, organize and display appropriate materials. Use a checklist to identify items in nine indoor interest areas and assess how materials are organized and displayed. List materials to add to interest areas. Review checklist with colleagues and the trainer and decide on changes. Note children's reactions.	Review completed checklists and recommended additions. Discuss how new items will enhance children's development and how they will be organized and displayed. If appropriate, help teachers obtain or make new items. Encourage teachers to propose new purchases to their supervisors.
V. Organizing the Outdoor Environment	Read about the characteristics of outdoor environments that offer children a range of experiences. Review a chart of materials and equipment for outdoor activities and ways children use them. Identify current outdoor activities. Develop and implement plans to add or improve three activities. Report on what children do. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review and discuss plans. Ask teachers to explain how the plans will give children new experiences. If appropriate, help teachers obtain or make new items. Discuss children's reactions to the changes.

Module 3: Learning Environment (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
VI. Planning the Daily Schedule, Routines, and Transitions	Read about appropriate daily schedules, routines, and transitions. Review a sample schedule and describe why it is appropriate for preschool children. Assess the daily schedule and decide on needed changes. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss the effectiveness of daily schedules and plans for carrying out routines. Have teachers determine what changes are needed. If possible, observe routines and transitions. Help teachers identify problems and propose solutions.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Show the slide/video *The NEW Room Arrangement as a Teaching Strategy* and discuss ideas teachers would like to try to make their indoor learning environments more appropriate for and responsive to the children in their care.
- Collect materials for making classroom labels (e.g., clear and solid colors of adhesive paper, poster board, construction paper, permanent markers, glue).
- Suggest that teachers plan and hold a workshop for parents on learning environments at the center and at home. Discuss topics such as:
  - messages in the environment;
  - how the environment promotes active learning; and
  - how children learn to take care of the environment.
- Hold a workshop on adapting indoor and outdoor environments for children with special needs. Cover the relevant requirements of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and offer specific strategies that respond to the needs of children enrolled. Contact the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Children (1-800-328-0272) for information and suggested resources.
- Help teachers set up a system for collecting and storing "found" materials (e.g., dramatic play props, cardboard boxes, plastic containers, paper, fabric scraps).

Completing Module 4: Physical

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about gross and fine motor development, the link between physical fitness and self-esteem, and what teachers can do to promote preschool children's physical development. Read examples of situations in which teachers promoted physical development and answer questions. Answer questions about staying physically fit by maintaining good posture and flexibility. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; plans to improve posture and movements; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Gross Motor Skills	Read about preschool children's development of gross motor skills. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to promote children's gross motor skills. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to encourage children to develop and use gross motor skills. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children using gross motor skills. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Observing and Planning for Children's Fine Motor Development	Read about how preschool children develop fine motor skills and use senses to coordinate movement. Observe two children using fine motor skills. Summarize each child's fine motor skills and challenges and list ways to promote fine motor development. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss observation summaries. Suggest materials, routines, and activities that will give children opportunities to develop and practice fine motor skills.

Module 4: Physical (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Encouraging Physical Fitness	Read about how teachers can help children learn gross motor skills, how outdoor play promotes physical fitness, and how to provide indoor physical activities. Plan and implement an open-ended fitness activity. Report on what happened and describe plans for repeating or changing the activity. Discuss with parents of children who participated and the trainer. Encourage parents to include children in family fitness activities.	Review activity plans and summaries and discuss how the activity encouraged children's physical fitness. Suggest other open-ended activities that appeal to groups of children with a wide range of interests and physical abilities. Offer to review indoor and outdoor environments to make sure children have daily opportunities to use their large muscles and stay physically fit.
IV. Creating an Environment That Supports Physical Development	Read about the importance of creating an environment that allows children of varied skill levels to use their fine and gross motor skills. Review a chart describing typical opportunities for using fine and gross motor skills in each interest area. Add their ideas to the chart. Observe one child working on a fine motor skill and one child working on a gross motor skill. For each skill, suggest appropriate materials to promote development. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss ideas listed on charts. If appropriate, suggest materials and activities. Review and discuss observation summaries. Ask teachers to explain how the suggested materials promote use of the fine or gross motor skill. Suggest completing this activity for other children.
V. Promoting Positive Self-Concepts Through Development of Physical Skills	Read about the relationship between physical development and positive self-concepts and how teachers' interactions with children can encourage a sense of competence. Read examples of children using physical skills, list appropriate activities and materials, and suggest what to say to encourage the child. Discuss the responses with the trainer.	Review and discuss responses, offer feedback, and give suggestions if needed. Discuss ways to help individual children feel successful, regardless of the level of their physical skills.

Module 4: Physical (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Observe children about whom teachers are concerned—children who seem to have unusual delays in fine or gross motor skill development. Share your observation notes with teachers and, if needed, with the children's parents. Encourage parents to follow up with their pediatrician or a specialist, if necessary.
- Hold a workshop in which teachers use their fine motor skills as children do during activities such as woodworking, fingerpainting, cooking, doing puzzles, setting the table, building with Legos, stringing beads, water play, and outdoor mural painting. Point out the small muscle skills developed through these and similar activities.
- Lead role plays so teachers can practice encouraging children who are developing physical skills. Ask two teachers to pretend they are children engaged in an activity while a third teacher provides encouragement. Switch roles so everyone has a turn playing each role. Discuss how it feels to give and receive encouragement.
- Ask teachers to assume responsibility for teaching their colleagues how to play a non-competitive game or conduct an activity that encourages physical fitness. Provide blank forms so teachers can describe the game or activity, list the materials and equipment, present guidelines, and suggest variations so children with a wide range of physical skills can join in.

Completing Module 5: Cognitive

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about theories of cognitive development and what teachers can do to promote preschool children's thinking skills. Read examples of situations in which teachers guided children's cognitive development and answer questions. Read about learning styles and factors that affect the ability to learn. List factors that have helped them become successful learners. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; individual learning styles and how this relates to helping children become lifelong learners; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Cognitive Development	Read about the way preschool children construct knowledge about the world. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to promote children's cognitive development. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to encourage children's cognitive development. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children using thinking and problem-solving skills. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Understanding How Preschool Children Think	Read about the characteristics of preschool children's thinking as they attempt to make sense of the world. Over a one-week period, observe and record examples of children using thinking skills to make sense of the world. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss observations of children making sense of the world. If possible, conduct joint observations. Share notes with teachers and discuss how children expand their thinking.

Module 5: Cognitive (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Encouraging Children to Explore and Discover	Read about how children use a variety of skills to explore the world and make discoveries and how asking open-ended questions helps children build on what they already know. Observe and note examples of children using thinking skills as they work and play indoors and outdoors. Record what the children did and what teachers said to promote learning and thinking. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss observation summaries and how open-ended questions promoted thinking and learning. Discuss ways to make sure the environment, activities, routines, and teacher interactions offer opportunities for children to: notice characteristics; identify similarities and differences; classify; sequence; and observe cause and effect.
IV. Planning Experiences with Sand and Water	Read about how children construct knowledge, use props, and engage in planned experiences through sand and water play. Plan, implement, and describe what happens during a sand and water activity. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss sand and water play activity plans. Ask teachers to describe what children did that differed from what they had expected. If appropriate, help teachers establish a system for collecting and sharing sand and water play props.
V. Helping Children Develop Problem-Solving Skills	Read about the importance of: letting children solve their own problems; creating an environment that encourages problem solving; and involving children in resolving classroom problems. Identify a problem. Discuss it with children and involve them in finding a solution. Report on what happens. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	If possible, observe teachers leading children in the problem-solving exercise. Discuss what happened and how children were actively involved in developing and implementing solutions. Discuss how teachers can encourage children to be problem-solvers rather than stepping in to solve problems for them.

Module 5: Cognitive (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
VI. Engaging Children in Long-Term Studies	Read about appropriate topics for long-term studies and the value of offering materials and experiences that enable children to recreate what they are learning. Develop a plan for a long-term study that responds to children's immediate interests. Discuss the plan with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss long-term study plans. Suggest additional materials, resources, and experiences, if appropriate. Offer to help teachers implement their plans. Spend time during regular observations focusing on what's happening with the long-term study. Remind teachers to observe children engaged in the long-term study so they will know what materials and experiences to offer in response to children's changing skills and interests.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- During visits to programs, model ways of asking open-ended questions that encourage children to expand their thinking.
- Suggest that teachers establish a schedule for regularly assessing how well the materials in interest areas promote children's cognitive skills. Teachers can replace items that are either too challenging or not challenging enough.
- Have teachers collect examples of children's statements and conversations that demonstrate use of thinking skills. Use the examples to begin a discussion of how children make sense of the world.
- Identify possible appropriate topics for long-term studies (a construction project near the program, a ship docking in the harbor). Work with teachers to plan ways to expose children to these events to see whether they are interested in learning more about them.

Completing Module 6: Communication

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about communication and language skills and what teachers can do to promote children's communication skills. Read examples of situations in which teachers promoted children's communication skills and answer questions. Read and complete a checklist about personal communication skills. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; self-assessment of communication skills and how this relates to promoting children's communication skills; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Language Skills	Read about how preschool children learn to use language and how teachers can promote communication skills. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to promote children's communication skills. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to help children develop and use communication skills. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children using language in different ways. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Observing Children's Listening and Speaking Skills	Read about how preschool children learn to listen and speak. Read also about signs of possible speech or language disorders. Observe the language skills of two children during a one-week period. Complete summaries of each child's listening and talking skills. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	If possible, observe the same two children using listening and talking skills. Discuss the completed summaries. Explain that teachers will use the observation summaries in the next activity.

Module 6: Communication (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Encouraging Children to Listen and Speak	Read about creating an environment that supports communication and how teachers can help children learn the rules of conversation and expand their understanding and vocabularies. Use observation notes of the two children from the previous activity to plan strategies and activities to encourage their listening and speaking. Try strategies and activities for two weeks and report on results. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review observation summaries from previous activity and the plan for using specific strategies and activities to encourage listening and speaking. Offer feedback and suggestions. Discuss what happened during the two-week period and how teachers can continue encouraging all children to listen and speak.
IV. Reading Books with Preschool Children	Read about: selecting books to match children's skills, interests, and characteristics; setting up a library area; reading to individual children and to small groups; and extending children's enjoyment of books. Select two books that are appropriate for the children in the classroom. Read one to a small group and one to an individual child. Report on each experience. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Encourage teachers to assess their book inventories regularly to make sure the current selections reflect and build on children's skills, interests, experiences, and characteristics. Discuss reports on reading to small groups and individuals. Compare the two experiences. Suggest teachers keep track of times they read to individuals to make sure every child has regular one-on-one reading experiences.
V. Supporting Emerging Literacy Skills	Read about emerging literacy; the stages children pass through as they learn to read and write; and how to create a print-rich environment. Observe, describe, and plan ways to support a child's emerging literacy. List ways the indoor environment encourages emerging literacy. Try five new ways to support emerging literacy and report on the results. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review and discuss how children explore and gradually gain literacy skills. Review and discuss teacher's observations and add information from your observations of the child. Assist teacher in designing activities, props, or interest areas that promote literacy.

Module 6: Communication (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Ask teachers if you can audio- or videotape their conversations with children. Listen to or view the tape together and discuss ways to encourage children's listening and speaking skills.
- Offer a workshop on signs of a possible speech or language delay or disability. Work with the program director to establish a system for informing parents of teachers' observations and making referrals to speech and language specialists, if necessary.
- During visits to classrooms, model your own love of reading by reading aloud to children, individually or in small groups.
- Invite a local librarian to visit the program to share information about library books and services for preschool children.
- Work with teachers to plan a workshop for parents on creating home literacy environments that naturally encourage children to explore reading and writing.
- Collect literacy-related materials such as food containers, signs, travel posters, calendars, magazines, phone books and message pads, in English and children's home languages. Have teachers brainstorm how to organize and display the materials to encourage children to explore literacy skills in their play.

Completing Module 7: Creative

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about creativity and what teachers can do to promote preschool children's creativity. Read examples of situations in which teachers promoted children's creativity and answer questions. Complete several exercises to stimulate creative thinking. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; responses to creative thinking exercises and how they relate to encouraging children's creativity; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Encourage Children's Creativity	Read about the ways preschool children use small muscles, thinking, language, and social skills to explore creativity. Complete a three-day log describing words and actions used to encourage children's creativity. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Share observations of teachers promoting children's creativity. Review and discuss three-day logs. Suggest additional ways to support children's creativity through words and actions.
II. Providing an Environment That Supports Creativity	Read about how materials and activities can encourage children to be creative in all interest areas. Use a checklist to assess whether the environment encourages creativity. Explain each rating. Share the assessment results with colleagues and plan ways to improve the environment.	Review completed checklists and offer feedback and additional suggestions. If appropriate, attend the meeting with colleagues and help teachers implement their improvement plans.

Module 7: Creative (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Promoting Creativity Through Interactions with Children	Read about teacher interactions that let children know their creativity is valued. Read also about asking open-ended questions to encourage children's creativity. Use a checklist to assess whether their teaching practices encourage creativity. Explain each rating. Share assessment results with colleagues and encourage them to continue using teaching practices that encourage creativity.	Review completed checklists and offer feedback and additional suggestions. If appropriate, attend the meeting with colleagues. Observe teachers and share specific examples from their notes of how teachers' interactions with children encourage creativity.
IV. Encouraging Self-Expression Though Music and Movement Experiences	Read about listening to sounds and music, singing with children, playing with rhythm instruments, and encouraging creative movement. With a colleague, plan improved strategies for using different kinds of music and movement experiences. Select one strategy to implement. Report on what happened. Discuss the activity with the trainer. Work with colleagues to implement the other strategies.	Review and discuss improvement strategies and report of what happened while trying one strategy over a week-long period. Discuss ways children can express their creativity through music and movement experiences.
V. Offering Art Experiences That Invite Exploration and Experimentation	Read about why children enjoy the process of using art materials; art activities offered every day; developmental stages of drawing and painting; paints, painting tools, and paper; collages and assemblages; and playdough and clay. Review a chart of suggested art materials. Observe a child engaged in art experiences over a three-day period. Use notes to select, plan, and implement an art activity to match the child's interest and skill level. Report on what happened. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Help teachers plan ways to provide a variety of open-ended art materials and experiences that allow children to fully explore the creative process. Review and discuss observation notes and activity plan. If possible, observe teachers implementing the activity. Assist in cleaning up after messy activities. Model ways to include children in clean up—sweeping, mopping, wiping tables, and so on.

Module 7: Creative (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Summarizing Your Progress	Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Offer a hands-on, open-ended workshop on the creative process. Provide a wide variety of materials and encourage teachers to get fully involved. Help teachers focus on the process rather than the products of their creative work. At the end of the workshop, ask participants to discuss their feelings about staying focused on the process of creativity. How might their experiences affect their approach to encouraging children's creativity?

- Encourage teachers to identify what they really love to do and plan ways to explore their creativity in these areas.

- Ask teachers to think of a time during their childhood when an adult supported their creativity. List what the adults did to encourage creativity. Next, ask teachers to think of a time when an adult prevented them from being creative. List the adult actions that got in the way of their creativity. Use the two lists to discuss how teachers can actively encourage children's creative efforts.

- Ask teachers to record each child's creative activities in a portfolio. The portfolio can include paintings and drawings, photographs of block structures or play dough creations, and audiotapes of singing or making music. Teachers and parents can write brief notes describing children's use of creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Remind teachers to review the portfolios periodically and share them with parents.

Completing Module 8: Self

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about how children develop a sense of self and what teachers can do to support this process. Read examples of situations in which teachers fostered children's sense of competence and esteem and answer questions. Answer questions about the experiences that contributed to their own sense of self and values. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; experiences that contributed to their values, expectations, and sense of self and how they relate to helping children feel good about themselves; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Foster Self-Esteem	Read about Erikson's stages of emotional development and what teachers can do to encourage preschool children's initiative. Complete chart showing how teachers can use information about what children are like to foster self-esteem. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to help children gain a sense of self and self-esteem. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children gaining self-confidence. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Getting to Know Each Child	Read about strategies for getting to know and understand what makes each child unique. Conduct brief observations of two children. Use notes to answer questions about each child's sense of self and self-esteem and how the children are similar and different. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review and discuss observation notes and responses to questions. Stress that because children's interests, strengths, and needs change quickly, regular observations are crucial. Encourage teachers to work with colleagues to create a system for conducting regular observations of each child.

Module 8: Self (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Responding to Each Child as an Individual	Read about how children develop a sense of competence that contributes to self-esteem. Read also about teaching practices that support each child as unique. Observe the same two children as in the previous activity. Use notes to describe each child and plan ways to encourage each one's sense of competence. Discuss the activity with colleagues and plan ways to respond to each child through the environment, activities, and interactions.	If possible, observe the same children that teachers observed. Discuss descriptions of children and plans for encouraging competence. Help teachers assess the environment, activities, and interactions to determine whether these contribute to children's sense of competence. Suggest ways to tailor the level of support offered to each child.
IV. Helping Children Deal with Separation	Read about the lifelong process of separation, how children cope with feelings about separation, and how teachers can work with families to help children handle separation. Select two different children, describe each child's behaviors, and plan ways to help each child deal with feelings about separation.	Review and discuss summaries of each child and strategies for helping them cope with separation. Help teachers understand that feelings about separation arise throughout the day, not just at drop-off and pick-up times.
V. Using Caring Words that Help Foster Self-Esteem	Read about the importance of showing respect for children by listening carefully to what they say and using positive and supportive words when talking with them. Write what a teacher might say to children in typical situations. Discuss the caring words with the trainer. Display caring words in the classroom, if desired. If possible, make an audio- or videotape while talking with children. Review the tape with the trainer and discuss children's reactions.	Acknowledge use of caring words. Provide encouragement and feedback as teachers begin to use caring words. Offer feedback and model speaking to children in respectful ways. Help interested teachers gain access to a tape recorder or video camera. Discuss written responses to children in typical situations. If necessary, help teachers rewrite them in positive terms. Encourage teachers to make and display several signs listing caring words to use as reminders.

Module 8: Self (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Ask teachers to suggest new materials that would offer greater challenges, allow children to use skills they aren't currently using, provide greater variety, or respond to children's families, ethnicity, cultures, home languages, and other individual characteristics. Collect items such as dramatic play props, and set priorities for purchasing others.

- Encourage teachers to share with families specific examples of their children's skills and accomplishments. Have teachers role play an instance in which they offer suggestions to parents about promoting children's sense of competence at home.

- Have teachers think back to the people whose company they especially enjoyed during childhood. Ask them to picture themselves talking with one of these people. Ask questions such as the following to lead a discussion about how adults can help children feel competent.

  - What did this person do or say to help you feel good about yourself?
  - How did you feel about yourself at the time?
  - How did your experiences with this person affect your sense of competence?
  - What can you do and say to help children feel competent of their abilities?

- Lead a discussion about daily routines—what teachers do and how they involve the children. Identify tasks the children can do alone and those that require some guidance from teachers. List materials, such as small pitchers and brooms, that allow children to do "real" jobs. Assess whether classroom arrangements are encouraging children's competence. For example, are toys, materials, and items such as tissues and paper towels stored within children's reach, so children can be independent?

Completing Module 9: Social

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about how children develop social skills and what teachers can do to promote children's social skills. Read examples of situations in which teachers promoted children's social skills and answer questions. Read and reflect on the ways teachers model social skills. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; experiences modeling social skills and how children learn from teachers; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Promote Social Development	Read about the role of play in preschool children's social development. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to promote social development. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to help children develop and use social skills. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of children using social skills in their play. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Promoting Children's Dramatic Play	Read about creating an environment that supports dramatic play using prop boxes. Read also about what teachers can do to guide and extend children's play. Create a prop box, observe children using the props, report on what the children did, and write a plan for extending their play. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Offer to help collect items for prop boxes. Suggest props that reflect the children's cultures, ethnicity, families, and home languages. Review and discuss observation summaries and plans for extending play. Help teachers think of props to add to the box and other ways to build on the children's play.

Module 9: Social (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Creating an Environment That Supports Children's Social Development	Read about how features of the physical and programmatic environment can support children's social development. Select one aspect of the physical environment and one aspect of the programmatic environment. Describe how it affects social development. Then, explain how to change each aspect, implement changes, and report on what happened. Discuss the activity with colleagues. Implement other changes, as needed.	Discuss features of the physical and programmatic environments that support social development. Ask teachers to give examples of how their environments meet the criteria listed in the activity. Review and offer feedback on reports. If possible, observe in classrooms and attend discussions with colleagues. Offer to help make changes, if appropriate.
IV. Helping Children Learn Caring Behaviors	Read about how to recognize and encourage caring behaviors in children. For three days, conduct five-minute observations several times a day. Review notes and list examples of children learning caring behaviors. Reflect on their own behaviors and interactions. Note examples of times they demonstrated and promoted caring behaviors. Make and read a book to children about caring behaviors. Report on what happened. Discuss the activity with a colleague and the trainer.	Review observation summaries and discuss ways to further encourage caring behaviors. Share observations of teachers encouraging children's caring behaviors. Review and discuss the book and reading experience. Encourage teachers to continue making books about the children in their care.
V. Helping Children Relate Positively to Others	Read about the role of teachers in helping children, (especially those who are shy, overly aggressive, or rejected by others) make friends. Conduct several five-minute observations of a child who needs help learning to make friends. Review notes and summarize thoughts about the child. Use notes and information in the learning activity to plan and carry out strategies for helping the child play with others. Report on what happened. Discuss the activity with the trainer. If necessary, discuss possible causes of child's behaviors with parents.	If possible, observe in the classroom and prepare to discuss children who may be having trouble making friends. Review teachers' observation notes, plans, and results; offer feedback and suggestions. Encourage teachers to keep trying different techniques with children who are having difficulty playing with others. Check back with teachers periodically concerning children's interactions with each other.

Module 9: Social (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Assist teachers who want to work with parents to locate professional help for a child who seems to be experiencing severe problems getting along with others.
- Suggest that teachers ask the children's librarian at their local library to recommend children's books about caring behaviors. Teachers can place the books in the library area, read them aloud to a small group of children, and offer activities and materials that allow children to fully explore the stories and characters more fully.
- Help teachers write a newsletter article or note to parents about creating and using prop boxes at home. The newsletter can describe some popular themes and props and suggest ways parents can encourage their children's play.
- Offer a workshop on play for teachers and parents. Highlight the book, *Facilitating Play*, by Sara Smilansky and Leah Shefatya and explore their theory of the relationship between socio-dramatic play and later academic achievement.

Completing Module 10: Guidance

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about self-discipline and how to help children learn self-control. Read examples of situations in which teachers guided children's behavior and answer questions. Read and reflect on ways their self-discipline guides their behavior at home and work. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; experiences using self-discipline and how this relates to helping children gain self-discipline; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Behavior	Read about Greenspan's milestones of emotional development that are the foundation for self-discipline. Complete chart showing how teachers can use child development information to guide their behavior. Discuss chart with the trainer. Continue adding to the chart while working on the module.	Discuss what teachers can do to help children develop and use self-discipline. Review examples recorded on charts. Share their observations of teachers using positive guidance that helps children gain self-discipline. Encourage teachers to add to the chart while working on the module.
II. Creating an Environment That Supports Self-Discipline	Read about the effect of the physical environment on children's behavior. Review typical behaviors, possible problems, and solutions. List possible causes of behaviors and suggest solutions. Compare to answer sheet at end of module. For of a typical day, describe common problem behaviors, possible problems, and solutions. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Reflect on their observations of children's behavior. Review and discuss teachers' completed charts. After teachers make changes to the environment, conduct classroom observations. Share notes with teachers and jointly analyze the impact of the environmental changes. If misbehavior continues after teachers make changes to environment, discuss other possible causes and solutions.

Module 10: Guidance (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Guiding Children's Behavior	Read about the differences between discipline and punishment, typical reasons for misbehavior, and positive guidance approaches. Review a chart listing examples of teachers using positive guidance. For three days, keep track of how they guide a child's behavior. Report on the child's behavior, possible reasons for the behavior, and their use of positive guidance. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss the differences between discipline and punishment. Make sure teachers understand why it is important to help children develop self-discipline—a skill used throughout life. If possible, observe teachers' use of positive guidance techniques and use notes to provide objective feedback. Review observation summaries and highlight instances when teachers used positive guidance techniques. Encourage continued observation of children to determine their needs and the reasons for their behavior, and to select guidance techniques appropriate for individual children and situations.
IV. Using Words to Provide Positive Guidance	Read about the importance of words and tone of voice in guiding children's behavior and using clear, positive statements to help children understand guidance messages. Review examples of what teachers might say to guide children in different situations. Write words they could use to guide children's behavior in typical situations. Discuss the activity with the trainer. Write positive statements on poster board and hang in the room, if desired.	Read examples and discuss any that seem inappropriate. Ask, "What would a child be likely to feel or think if you said this?" Acknowledge teachers' progress in using words to provide positive guidance; give specific examples from observation notes. Review positive statement posters. Help teachers reword negative statements in positive ways, if necessary.
V. Setting Rules and Limits	Read why children need a few simple rules, how to involve children in creating rules, when rules should be individualized, using positive reminders, and revising rules as children grow. List their classroom rules and limits using positive phrases. Select one rule and answer questions about why it exists and how it is applied. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss teachers' reactions to rules—at work, at home, and in society at large—and the lessons children learn from helping to make rules. Ask teachers to describe instances when they individualized rules to meet a child's needs. Discuss the lists of rules and responses to questions. Help teachers restate rules in positive terms, if needed. Encourage teachers to set a schedule for reviewing rules to make sure they are still appropriate for the children in the group.

Module 10: Guidance (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
VI. Responding to Challenging Behaviors	Read about children's challenging behaviors and some probable reasons for them. Focus on a child whose behavior is challenging. Describe the behavior and how teachers usually respond. Ask the child's parents to participate in the activity. Work with them to develop a joint plan for responding to the behavior. Implement the plan and evaluate the results. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Discuss the meaning of "challenging behavior" and why this term is used instead of "problem behavior." If possible, observe the child with the challenging behavior and share notes and perceptions with the teachers. If asked, help teachers prepare for the discussion with the child's parents. Help teachers implement classroom strategies for responding to the behavior. Check back regularly to discuss the child's progress. Reinforce continued use of positive guidance to respond to challenging behaviors.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review and add examples to charts from Learning Activity I. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Offer a workshop based on strategies that help children master important socio-emotional miliestones as described in Dr. Stanley Greenspan's book, *First Feelings, Milestones in the Emotional Development of Your Baby and Child* (see the bibliography in the Orientation in Volume I.) Lead role plays so teachers can practice using these strategies in a safe setting. If appropriate, model the strategies during visits to classrooms. Observe teachers using the strategies, then offer objective reports of what you saw and heard and how the children responded.

- Encourage teachers to form support groups so they can help each other plan effective responses to children with challenging behaviors. Remind teachers to maintain confidentiality related to the children and families.

- Use the information in this module and others to make a large chart showing the developmental stages of preschool children. Post the chart where all teachers can see it. Next to the chart, post a piece of paper with the question, "How can you use this information to encourage self-discipline?" Ask teachers to write their own suggestions and comment on each other's. Discuss the suggestions at a staff meeting.

- Sponsor a workshop for parents and teachers to discuss typical behaviors of preschool children and appropriate guidance techniques that can be used at home and/or at the program. Help teachers plan the agenda and select the key ideas to share with parents.

- Offer to audio- or videotape teachers' conversations and interactions with children. Listen to or view the tape together and note the words teachers used to guide children's behavior.

Completing Module 11: Families

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about how teachers and parents work as a team and what teachers do in their work with families. Read examples of situations in which teachers worked with families and answer questions. Read about families and answer questions about their own experiences growing up in a family. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; experiences in their families and how this affects their partnerships with parents; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Developing a Partnership with Parents	Read about types of information that parents and teachers can share. Read also about establishing and maintaining strong partnerships with parents. For two weeks, tape or take notes on daily interactions with parents of a child. Record information shared and ways that the partnership helped the child. Discuss this activity with the child's parents with the trainer.	Observe interactions between teachers and parents. Give objective accounts of what was said and the nonverbal communication that took place. Discuss notes on interactions with family. Give feedback and suggest ways to improve the relationship, if appropriate. Suggest completing an abbreviated version of this activity with the parents of other children.
II. Keeping Parents Informed About the Program	Read about techniques for keeping all parents informed about program activities. Answer questions about a technique the program uses to keep parents informed. Suggest, try out, and report on ideas for improving it. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Read and give feedback on teachers' communication techniques such as newsletters, memos, handbooks, and bulletin boards. Discuss tone, language level, and sensitivity to diversity. Review responses to questions about the communication technique. Discuss new ways to keep parents informed.

Module 11: Families (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Providing Ways for Parents to Be Involved	Read about a variety of parent involvement options. Plan and try out a strategy for parent involvement. Report on what happened and develop a follow-up plan. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Have teachers ask parents how they would like to be involved. Discuss their responses. Review parent involvement strategies; provide reinforcement and suggestions. Offer to help get supplies if needed. Help teachers set realistic expectations for parent involvement.
IV. Planning and Participating in Parent-Teacher Conferences	Read about the goals of parent-teacher conferences and how to plan and participate in them. Prepare for a conference— complete a planning form, summarize the child's progress, and suggest goals and strategies for the next six months. Hold the conference and set goals for the next six months. Evaluate the conference. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Discuss the importance of holding regular conferences to review each child's progress in depth. Help teachers prepare for conferences by reviewing planning forms and role-playing what might take place. If possible, attend conferences. Then, give feedback on tone, body language, information shared, and overall success of interactions. Discuss teachers' feelings about conferences. Remind teachers that it is likely they will relate differently to each parent. Help them tailor their communication styles accordingly.
V. Reaching Out to Families	Read about recognizing when families are under stress, helping families locate resources, and providing parents with information on child growth and development. Keep a two-week journal of times they reached out to parents— list needs, responses, and outcomes. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review examples, offer feedback and answer questions about supporting families. Reinforce policies on confidentiality and referrals. Discuss signs of stress in children. Discuss when it is appropriate to talk about a situation with a supervisor and/or refer a family to a professional.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Module 11: Families (continued)

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Lead a discussion on the similarities and differences between the families teachers grew up in and today's families (see the overview for this module). Provide current statistics about family makeup today: single parent families; families with two working spouses; those with children from previous marriages; and families that live far away from their own parents and siblings.
- Provide information on signs and symptoms of problems faced by families (substance abuse, spouse abuse, depression). Invite appropriate agencies to make presentations on how to respond when it appears that a parent has a problem needing immediate attention. Develop a list of public and private, community and state organizations that provide services to families (e.g., hotlines and support groups).
- Work with community leaders to offer a workshop for teachers on the cultures represented in the program's families and ways to provide a program that values and responds to diversity.
- Conduct an informal survey of all parents to identify the kinds of information they would like to receive from the program and in what form (newsletters, informal chats, message centers, phone calls, bulletin boards). The survey can ask parents what information about their children they would like to share with teachers.

Completing Module 12: Program Management

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about teachers' management tasks and why individualizing is an important management responsibility. Read examples of situations in which teachers effectively managed the program and answer questions. Complete a chart about ways to solve frustrating situations in their daily lives. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; frustrations and proposed solutions listed on their charts; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training assessment where possible with their written observations.
I. Using a Systematic Approach to Observing and Recording	Read about the importance of conducting observations and guidelines for systematic and objective observations. Review examples of observations that are objective and accurate and those that are not. Read about checking the accuracy of observation recordings. Observe a child for five to ten minutes each day for a week. At least twice during the week, conduct a joint observation with another person and compare recordings. If the two recordings are not similar, ask the trainer to conduct a joint observation of another child. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Make sure teachers understand that observation is a critical skill for early childhood professionals. Teachers will use observation while completing the modules and throughout their early childhood careers. If possible, conduct and discuss at least two co-observations of the child. If this is not possible, make sure teachers conduct joint observations with colleagues or supervisors. Note examples of accurate and objective recordings that avoid the use of labels. Provide support and assistance if teachers need to repeat the activity.

Module 12: Program Management (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
II. Individualizing the Program	Read about what it means to individualize the program, strategies for individualizing different elements of the program, and including children with disabilities. Observe two children for five to ten minutes at least once a day, for a week. Use what they already know about the children and observation notes to describe individual strengths, skills, interests, and so on. For the same two children, develop a plan for individualizing each program element. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Offer to supervise the children while teachers practice observing and recording. Help teachers analyze their recordings and draw conclusions about children's strengths, interest, and needs. Review and discuss individualizing summary forms and plans. Encourage teachers to establish a system for conducting regular observations of all the children.
III. Creating and Using Portfolios	Read about creating portfolios to keep track of children's skills, changing interests, and experiences that affect development. Read also about using portfolios with parents and to plan individualized programs. During a two-week period, collect items to include in a portfolio for one of the children observed in Learning Activity I or II. Involve the child and parents in selecting items. Develop a system for organizing and storing the portfolio. Report on the process. Share the portfolio with the child's parents, then with colleagues and the trainer. If desired, meet with the director to discuss setting up a system for creating, updating, and using portfolios for all children.	Review and suggest other examples of work samples and items to include in a child's portfolio. Reinforce the reasons why portfolios are effective ways to track progress and plan individualized programs. Suggest ways to involve parents and children in selecting items to include in portfolios. Discuss completed portfolios and descriptions of their contents. If appropriate, join teachers in meeting with director to discuss establishing a system for maintaining portfolios for all children.
IV. Working as a Team to Plan the Program	Read about long-range and weekly planning, weekly planning categories, evaluation, and changing plans to reflect evaluation results. Work with a colleague to develop, implement, and evaluate a weekly plan. Discuss the activity with colleagues and the trainer.	Review and provide feedback on weekly plans. If appropriate, attend planning and evaluation meetings with teachers and colleagues. Help teachers assess the effectiveness of the format and approach they now use for weekly planning. If changes are needed, offer to assist.

Module 12: Program Management (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
V. Following Administrative Policies and Procedures	Read about administrative policies, practices, and procedures in early childhood programs, recordkeeping responsibilities, providing input on program issues, and laws and regulations related to including children with disabilities. Review program's policies and procedures for completing reports. Complete a schedule listing dates reports are due and teachers' responsibilities for completing them. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review and discuss report schedules. Discuss confidentiality issues. Help teachers schedule their time so they can complete reports and maintain records.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review observation recordings from Learning Activity I and describe how they used this information. Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule assessments for this module.

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Introduce a variety of observation and recording formats such as time sampling, event sampling, rating scales, and skills checklists. Encourage teachers to pick the instrument or format that best serves a particular need, such as observing to see if the environment is working, noting children's progress in a specific area, or keeping records to discuss with parents.
- Provide a video camera and tripod that teachers can use indoors or outdoors. Encourage them to let the camera run, cinema verité style. Then sit with teachers to view what the camera has recorded. Discuss what the children did, materials and skills they used, how they interacted with each other and with the teachers, and how the teachers responded.
- Organize a group of teachers to review their program's administrative policies, practices, and procedures. Ask them to suggest changes or additions to the documents to make sure they are complete and reflect in a practical way all of the program's management functions. Have group members prepare a written report and meet with the director to present their findings.
- Plan a series of workshops on the management skills teachers use such as team building, observing and recording, time management, using a planning cycle, and recordkeeping.

Completing Module 13: Professionalism

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
Overview and Pre-Training Assessment	Read about what it means to be a professional and the four stages of professional development. Read examples of situations in which teachers maintained a commitment to professionalism and answer questions. Respond to questions about their interests and skills and how these relate to working with preschool children. Discuss responses with two colleagues. Complete pre-training assessment and list three to five skills to improve or topics to learn more about. Discuss overview and pre-training assessment with the trainer.	Review their ongoing written observations of teachers. Discuss with teachers: responses to questions; examples of times they used their special skills and interests at work and children's responses; and pre-training assessment. Validate pre-training where possible from meetings and their knowledge of teachers.
I. Assessing Yourself	Read about standards for performance established by professional associations and groups. Focus on one part of the program, and compare and contrast it with guidelines in two documents that define standards for quality. Discuss with a colleague how the standards apply to the program. Clarify their roles as early childhood professionals. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Provide or help teachers obtain copies of documents that define standards for quality. Discuss suggestions developed by teachers and their colleagues. Help them implement suggestions, if appropriate.
II. Continuing to Learn About Caring for Children	Read about the benefits of continued learning, joining professional groups, and other ways to continue professional growth. Review responses to "Taking a Look at Yourself" in the overview to the module. Develop a plan for using available resources to improve a skill or learn more about a topic. Identify short- and long-range goals and write a plan for professional development. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Review goals and assist in making them a reality. Periodically review progress in reaching goals and provide reinforcement and assistance. Encourage teachers to build time for training and skill development into their schedules. Provide information on relevant classes, lectures, and conferences.

Module 13: Professionalism (continued)

Learning Activity	What Teachers Do	What Trainers Do
III. Applying Professional Ethics at All Times	Review examples of the ethical standards for teaching young children as well as professional and unprofessional behaviors. List examples of ways their behavior conforms to the ethics of teaching young children. Read several ethical case studies and describe what an early childhood professional should do in each case. Discuss case studies with colleagues and the trainers.	Discuss examples of professional behavior. Review observation notes to identify and share examples of ethical behavior. Discuss ethical issues as they arise. Meet with several teachers to discuss responses to case studies. Stress that these are difficult situations and there are no easy answers. Encourage teachers by taking note of their conscientious work habits and ethical behavior.
IV. Becoming an Advocate for Children and Families	Read about the importance of advocating for children and families and how teachers can become advocates. Consider feelings about advocacy. Plan ways to become an advocate. Discuss the activity with the trainer.	Provide information on current issues related to children and families. Collect and share relevant professional articles and bulletins. Offer to assist in advocacy efforts.
V. Taking Care of Yourself	Read about the importance of taking care of one's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being, and the affects of stress. Record what they did to take care of themselves for two days. Review answers after the first day and try to improve on the second day. Discuss the activity with the trainer. Plan ways to care for oneself.	Reinforce the importance of taking care of one's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual well-being. Review plans and offer to assist in implementing them. Be a good model by taking care of themselves.
Summarizing Your Progress	Review responses to pre-training assessment, summarize what was learned in this module, and list skills developed or improved.	Discuss summary of progress. Schedule knowledge assessment for this module. There is no competency assessment for this module, as the skills used are not readily observable.

Module 13: Professionalism (continued)

Strategies for Extending Learning

- Facilitate a discussion about issues affecting the health and well-being of children and families in the community or state, and discuss ways in which teachers can get involved in advocacy efforts.
- Build a comprehensive lending library of professional books, journals, and audiovisual materials on early childhood development and education, cultural competence, including children with disabilities, involving families, and other topics of interest to teachers.
- Share information about classes on stress management, nutrition, assertiveness, and other topics relevant to leading a healthy lifestyle.
- Encourage teachers to be partners in each other's professional development. They might share rides, provide child care, plan and lead workshops together, share resources, and otherwise help each other achieve their professional goals.
- Conduct workshops on ethical issues such as appropriate discipline methods or how to respond when teachers and parents disagree on practices each considers appropriate. Ask teachers to suggest topics they would like to discuss.
- Discuss with teachers the next steps in their professional development. For example, will they seek a credential, attend college courses, enroll in a degree program, or continue self-study? Help teachers understand how these modules fit into their plans for ongoing professional growth.

Chapter IV

Leading Group Training Sessions

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Chapter IV

Leading Group Training Sessions

This chapter describes:

- Selecting training techniques
- Attending to logistics
- Facilitating group training sessions
- Evaluating training
- Planning a series of group sessions
- A sample training plan for Module 10, Guidance

Although *Caring for Preschool Children* is designed as a supervised, self-instructional training program, it could also be used in a variety of group settings. The modules can serve as the focus for a series of workshops offered by a resource and referral agency. Child development programs can use the modules as an in-house training program and discuss learning activities at staff meetings or at scheduled professional development sessions. Colleges can use *Caring for Preschool Children* as a textbook for several early childhood courses.

When using the modules in group settings, it is important to include regular observations of teachers working with children as a component of the training. Group meetings can provide valuable information about each teacher's progress; however, it is crucial to also offer individualized, on-site feedback and support that is based on systematic, objective observations.

If you teach a college course, observation visits can be established as a lab or practicum. Thirteen observation visits would be ideal (one per module). A minimum of eight is recommended when using these materials as the core curriculum for the courses listed in the chart on the next page. For each course, use one visit to observe and provide support and feedback and one to administer the assessments. The chart on page 12 illustrates how the 13 modules in *Caring for Preschool Children* might be used for a series of college courses.

Selecting Training Techniques

In planning group training based on *Caring for Preschool Children*, select training techniques that reflect current knowledge about how adults learn, address the needs of the teachers who will participate, and accommodate your preferences and philosophy of training. For example, if you're a skilled lecturer, you will want to include mini-lectures as part of your workshops. On the other hand, if you're uncomfortable as a lecturer, you may rely on group-oriented activities. Your choice of techniques will also reflect the preferences of those whom you are training. This means you should select techniques that suit your style and use a range of approaches to meet participants' varied learning styles.

It's best to include a variety of activities and use different kinds of media, when possible. A balance of training techniques contributes to the group's interest and ultimately ensures greater retention and application of skills and content. To encourage participants' active involvement, use role playing, small group analysis, discussion, and case studies. These techniques allow participants to apply training concepts, principles, and strategies to real-life situations.

The training techniques listed here represent a potpourri of ideas. Try out as many methods as possible to find those that suit you. Nearly all these techniques can be modified and reshaped to accommodate trainers and participants.

Written Handouts

Written material such as articles from professional journals or chapters in textbooks can be used as background reading or to provide further illustration of topics addressed in the learning activities. You can also use written materials to summarize content presented, as training assignments, or as supplemental readings for interested participants.

Audiovisuals

Audiovisuals can be very effective training tools. Videotapes that show realistic and relevant scenes from early childhood programs are especially good. Your own slides or videotapes of programs are other ways to illustrate ideas covered in training.

Overhead Transparencies

Overhead transparencies are recommended as accompaniments to presentations. They can break up the monotony of the spoken voice and reinforce the key points of a lecture for participants. Here are some suggestions for developing transparencies.

- Include key words and phrases only.
- Use large printed letters so participants can read the overheads from anywhere in the room.
- Keep illustrations or graphs simple.
- Keep color to a minimum and use to highlight, not decorate.
- Be sure there is sufficient contrast between the background color and lettering so overheads are easy to read.

Problem-Solving Activities

One of the most popular—and effective—training techniques is group problem-solving. Brainstorming solutions to realistic problems energizes a group and generates many creative ideas. The theory behind brainstorming is to separate idea creation from idea evaluation. This strategy works best in groups of 5 to 12 and requires a recorder and a moderator. The rules for brainstorming are as follows.

- All ideas are listed; no critical remarks are allowed.
- "Hitchhiking" is allowed—if one participant can improve upon or combine previously mentioned ideas, so much the better.
- "Freewheeling" is encouraged—even outlandish ideas keep the group momentum going.
- There is no limit to the number of ideas that can be included. The more ideas that participants generate, the more likely there will be some ideas that are viable solutions.
- Discussion and evaluation are postponed until participants have finished generating ideas.

Brainstorming could be used to answer questions such as the following:

- How can we involve more parents in the program?
- How can we plan open-ended activities that children can experience in different ways?
- Which community agencies and businesses could be partners with the program?

Some other problem-solving techniques you might try are described below.

- **Reverse brainstorming.** Participants identify all the negative aspects of a problem that needs to be remedied. This can be especially useful in examining current practices to see what isn't working, such as why children are getting into fights in one of the interest areas.
- **Slip method.** Participants write their solutions to a stated problem on slips of paper that are collected and grouped into logical categories for analysis and discussion. This can be especially useful in finding plausible solutions to a specific problem, such as how to keep parents informed about the program.
- **Delphi technique (group approach).** Participants generate as many responses to a particular problem as they can. Ideas are consolidated and presented for the group to consider and rank in order of viability. The filtering process identifies three to five "best" solutions to a particular problem. This can be a useful technique when participants represent a variety of roles and perspectives. For example, participants are likely to have different views and experiences related to handling a challenging behavior such as biting.

Case Studies

The chief advantage of the case study method is that it helps participants apply what they learn through lectures or assigned readings to real-life examples. By providing an illustrative story, a case study could be a powerful tool for helping participants apply theory to the real world. Many of the vignettes and examples in the modules can be used to develop case studies.

When using case studies, distribute a copy to each participant. After reading the case, participants can discuss it in pairs, small groups, or the full group. Ask questions such as the following to stimulate thinking:

- What went wrong?
- What worked well?
- How could this problem be avoided in the future?

- How could this individual build on his or her success?
- What did the children learn from this experience?
- What feedback would you provide to this individual?

Role Plays

Role plays give participants opportunities to act out real-life situations in a risk-free environment. By seeing things from another perspective, participants gain insight into various ways to approach a problem or issue. Keep in mind that some adults are very uncomfortable during role plays and may prefer to watch. Pressuring them to join in—"Oh come on, you'll have a good time"—generally backfires for both trainer and participant.

Discussion Techniques

Trainers can use the fishbowl, fantasy, and visualization techniques to stimulate discussions. For the **fishbowl**, divide participants into two groups, forming an inner and an outer ring of a circle. Give participants in the inner group an assignment based on the content presented in the training. For example, the inner group might consider how teachers can enhance their professional image. While the inner group discusses this problem for five to ten minutes, the outer group acts as observers. At the end of the allotted time, the two groups switch roles. At the conclusion of the second discussion, both groups comment on what they observed. Quite often, the discussion quickly becomes analytical because of mutual observations. This technique stimulates discussion among participants who are initially shy about contributing.

Fantasy and visualization are techniques used to draw on right brain (creative thinking) powers. **Fantasy** techniques usually ask participants to reflect on "what if . . ." situations. For example, "What if you had unlimited financial resources. How would you equip your room?" This allows participants to identify the materials and equipment in an ideal inventory. They can then compare the ideal to reality and see where compromises are appropriate. Conversely, you can use fantasy to think through worst-case scenarios.

Visualization helps participants relate the tasks at hand to past experiences. For example, you might ask participants to think about an experience in which they were forced to do something that made them uncomfortable. What were the circumstances? How did they feel? What did they do to relieve their discomfort? Did they ever get over being uncomfortable? You might use visualization if you sense that participants are uncomfortable dealing with particular situations, such as explaining to parents that children cannot attend the program when they have a contagious illness.

Mini-Lectures

These are shorter versions of lectures or oral presentations. Try to limit use of this technique to 20 minutes at a time. A straight verbal presentation is useful when you need to cover a large amount of basic material quickly. It can provide everyone in the group with a common framework.

Provide a handout summarizing the main points and let participants know in advance that this handout is available. Use visuals such as overhead transparencies or notes recorded on chart paper to illustrate key concepts. This supports the research cited earlier which says we retain 50 percent of what we see and hear compared to 20 percent of what we only hear.

At the close of the mini-lecture, review your key points, ask the group to summarize, conduct a discussion of the main points, or lead an activity related to the material covered. These steps allow participants to assimilate and make the material their own. They can relate it to their own thinking, decide what it means to them, and consider how it affects them in their work with children and families.

Group Discussions

Small groups of four to six participants are ideal for discussion and sharing. For participants who are reluctant to speak up in a large group, small group activities are a particularly good way of encouraging them to share their ideas. Small group interactions offer more intimate connections among group members, encourage the active involvement of all participants, and help them build networks and relationships.

To divide participants into small groups, try one of the following methods.

- Ask participants to sort themselves into groups of a specified size.
- Count off by a specified number.
- Distribute cards with pictures, stickers, or numbers; have participants match cards and group accordingly.
- Assign participants to groups according to roles or ability combinations.
- Distribute single parts of four to six piece puzzles—participants form groups by assembling the puzzles.
- Place pictures or names of objects that can be classified into a bag (for example, furniture, clothing, animals). Have participants choose a card then form a group with others whose objects fit in the same category.

Here are some suggestions for using small groups effectively.

- Be sure participants sit in a close circle as far as possible from other groups.
- Give three- and one-minute warnings before ending discussions.
- Ask groups to report back to the whole group "round robin" style. Each group takes a turn sharing one or two ideas until all new ideas are listed. This prevents repetitious reporting, and the first group to report does not "use up" all the popular answers.
- Reassemble as a full group without sharing what was discussed in the small groups. Reporting may not always be necessary, and not sharing discussions supports each small group's sense of uniqueness. You could suggest that the groups share their ideas informally, at break time.

Large group discussions can be used to break up a mini-lecture, discuss reactions to a videotape, and give participants an opportunity to contribute to and learn from their peers. If an entire group is 15 people or less, discussions involving the whole group allow members to contribute to and hear all the ideas presented.

The trainer's role is to facilitate communication and make sure messages are sent, received, and understood. It is important to receive participants' comments without judgment. If a statement indicates a lack of understanding, use the next break to discuss it with the participant. If a statement is incorrect, provide the correct information as diplomatically as possible, "Many people think that is true; however, the state health office recommends . . ."

During large group discussions, some participants might be frustrated because they feel ignored, misunderstood, or unable to participate. You need to observe both the behavior of the group as a whole and that of specific individuals. When a participant's comments have apparently been misunderstood, paraphrase and clarify them for the whole group. "Trinh, were you saying that . . . " This strategy allows participants to restate their comments and continue to participate.

Attending to Logistics

No matter what the topic, training is most successful when it is well planned. What may seem like simple details can enhance or destroy a training session. Here are some pointers for making logistical arrangements that support comfortable and productive training sessions.

- Schedule sessions at times that are convenient for teachers—for example, after the children leave for the day, or, if applicable, on in-service days. Teachers have steady demands on their professional and personal time. Accommodating their schedules is courteous, and it increases the possibility of high attendance.
- Notify participants of the date, time, and location of the training. If appropriate, include directions to the building and room where the session will be held. Provide an agenda and other preparatory materials in advance.
- Offer refreshments. Healthy snacks and hot or cold drinks refresh minds and energize participants. A table cloth, even fresh flowers, can make the training room inviting.
- Visit the training site to make sure the chairs provide enough support for participants to sit for a long period of time without getting restless and that there are tables or desk tops so participants can take notes.
- Prepare or arrange for needed materials and equipment in advance. This includes audiovisual equipment, videos, chart paper, markers, tape, chalk, handouts, and evaluation forms. Check to make sure the equipment works and that there are replacement bulbs, extension cords, and adapters on hand.
- Arrange the furniture before the participants arrive in a pattern that suits your training style. Many trainers prefer circles, semi-circles, or small tables because these arrangements encourage participant discussions. As a general rule, training is best received when the room is informally arranged.
- Display name tags, sign-in sheets, agendas, and reference materials in areas readily accessible to participants.
- Check to be sure the room temperature is comfortable prior to the start of the session. The temperature should be neither too hot not too cold, and air should be circulating freely. An overheated room can put an audience to sleep more quickly than a boring speaker.

By attending to these few logistical concerns, you'll be able to focus on the content of the training—rather than searching for extension cords or a building engineer to turn up the heat. Preparation goes a long way when it comes to training.

Facilitating Group Training Sessions

One of your most important roles is to help all participants feel comfortable enough to express their ideas, share their experiences, and ask questions. For some teachers, participating in group training sessions is uncomfortable. Even an experienced teacher may feel shy about talking aloud in a group. Here are some ideas you might try to help all participants share their ideas, ask questions, and offer solutions.

At the Start of the Session

- Greet participants by name as they enter. Welcome them to the session.
- Discuss the rules and guidelines, describe the plan for breaks, and state the time the session will end.
- Point out the location of rest rooms, telephones, and water fountains. This will minimize interruptions once the session starts.
- Provide an overview of the session. Explain the goals and objectives, describe the content and activities, and refer to the handouts. Invite participants to share their own expectations. Training is more effective when the group understands and shares a commitment to the goals and objectives.
- Let participants know they are responsible for their own learning. Explain that everyone will take something different from the session, depending on what is important to them, how much they contribute, and whether they integrate and use what they learn.
- Underscore the importance of the topics and skills to be covered. Emphasize that the purpose of training is to help teachers do their jobs better and enhance their professional development.

During Discussions

- Encourage participants to use active listening and to express their opinions. Acknowledge that sharing ideas and experiences in a group may feel a little uncomfortable at first. Note that all views are valuable and there is usually more than one "right" way to approach a topic. Avoid embarrassing participants by forcing each person to contribute.
- Look for "body-language" cues. They may alert you to discomfort with the subject matter (squirming), shyness about contributing (eye avoidance), or anger (turning away with the entire body). Try to respond to what you see.
- Guide participants to reach a compromise or at least respect different points of view. This is particularly important when conflicts or disagreements occur.
- Invite participants to ask questions. Answering their questions helps you explain information and eliminate misunderstandings. Before responding, rephrase the question to clarify what is being asked. Redirect some questions to the group to help participants find answers based on

their own experiences and expertise. If you can't answer a question, say so and try to find out the answer. Then do it and follow up to get the answer to the participant.

- Ask questions in response to cues from the audience. At times, it is appropriate to use both direct questions ("What books do you think would be helpful to a child whose parents are divorcing?") and open-ended questions ("How would you handle that situation?"). Also, refer a question to the entire group if you sense that an in-depth discussion would be beneficial. ("That's a tough problem. Does anyone have a suggestion?")

Throughout the Session

- Draw on participants' experiences. Training is more meaningful when participants can relate concepts to personal situations and experiences.
- Emphasize skill development rather than rote learning of "correct" responses. Learning is the process of assimilating new information and using it to improve skills.
- Encourage participants to make interpretations and draw conclusions. Effective training provides background information, data, and examples participants can use to identify patterns or trends, make generalizations, and draw conclusions.
- Adjust the agenda to meet the needs of participants. Use a mixture of planned and spontaneous activities and content, just as you take advantage of "teachable moments" with children.
- Use small group activities to discuss feelings. Consider using role playing, simulations, or problem-solving assignments.
- Give clear instructions for activities. Repeat them if necessary. Move around the room to assist to individuals or groups who are confused about the task.
- Review and summarize each segment of the training before moving on to the next topic. At the end of the session lead a summary discussion and answer participants' questions.
- Be available during breaks to discuss issues and topics. Some participants may prefer to share their views with you one-on-one rather than in front of the whole group.

Evaluating Training

As a trainer, you will want to know whether you've met your goals. Did the participants increase their understanding of the content? Do they feel capable of implementing what they have learned? Do they think the session was beneficial? Did they gain skills or change attitudes?

To answer these questions, you can use group or individual training evaluations. The following are two examples of evaluation techniques that involve the whole group in offering feedback during a training session. If it appears that participants are not learning and gaining new skills, you'll want to adjust your training as rapidly as possible to address the pinpointed weaknesses.

Pluses and Wishes. On chart paper or a blackboard draw a chart with two columns. Label one "pluses" and the other "wishes." You can ask a volunteer to record participants' responses. Ask, "What did you like about this training—what were the pluses?" and "What do you wish the training had included but did not?" Responses are likely to vary from concerns about logistics, "The chairs were uncomfortable," to comments on the content, "I can use the ideas for making prop boxes immediately."

Gets/Wants Chart—On chart paper or a blackboard make a chart with four quadrants, like the axes on a graph. Label as in the following example.

Got—Wanted	**Didn't Get—Wanted**
Suggestions for encouraging creativity *Opportunities to learn from other teachers*	*Ideas for new materials* *Refreshments*
Got—Didn't Want	**Didn't Get—Didn't Want**
Video I'd seen before *Role plays*	

As you go through each quadrant ask participants to provide examples of parts of the training they "got, and wanted," "got, but didn't want," and "didn't get, and wanted." When you get to the last quadrant explain that this one doesn't need to be addressed because the items must be irrelevant to their jobs ("You didn't get this information and it doesn't matter because you didn't want it!"). See the chart above for examples of the types of responses participants might offer. When planning future training, you can review the responses and decide if you should continue to offer the things they "got and wanted," provide things they "didn't get and wanted," and eliminate the things they "got and didn't want!"

Individual questionnaires, completed at the end of the training or returned one or two weeks later, can help you assess which parts of the training were well received. (An example of a training evaluation questionnaire appears on page 86.) For example, did participants like group exercises but dislike the mini-lectures? Did they think too much content was presented in too short a time? Review participants' reactions to answer questions such as these:

- How effectively did the training accomplish its objectives?
- How relevant was the training to the participants' jobs?
- What changes to the training are needed?
- Do participants need more in-depth training? On what topics?

Participant evaluations are a valuable tool for assessing whether training needs have been met. As you review the results, though, bear in mind that not everyone is always going to be satisfied with training. Some variations in answers are to be expected, and you should revise your approach only if warranted.

Training Evaluation Form

Session Title: ______________________ **Date:** ______________________

Trainer: ____

	Completely	Somewhat	Not At All
A. Content			
1. Did the topics address your needs?	________	________	________
2. Was the information relevant to your job?	________	________	________
B. Trainer			
3. Was the trainer well-informed on the subject?	________	________	________
4. Did the trainer help you learn?	________	________	________
5. Was the presentation well-organized?	________	________	________
C. Materials			
6. How appropriate and usable were the handouts?	________	________	________
7. How appropriate were other resources such as videos?	________	________	________

D. Suggestions or Comments (Indicate your likes, dislikes, and recommendations.)

E. How will you apply what you learned in this training?

Your name (optional): ____

Planning a Series of Group Sessions

As you plan a series of group sessions based on any of the modules in *Caring for Preschool Children,* think about the training techniques you will use, how you will facilitate discussions, and how you will evaluate the sessions. It may help to use a planning form to describe your approach. An example of a plan for a series of group sessions on Module 10 begins on page 88. This plam can be adapted to address individual interests and training needs. You can use Appendix A, Planning Form for Group Sessions, to plan a series of group sessions for any of the modules in *Caring for Preschool Children.*

Prior to each group session ask participants to submit their completed activities for your review and written comments (you may need to develop a system for doing this). Explain that you will return the activities, with your comments, at the end of each session. Offer to hold individual meetings or phone conferences with teachers who would like to discuss your feedback or have questions about the knowledge and skills addressed in the module.

Sample Training Plan for Module 10: Guidance

Overview

I. Open the Session

Begin with an open-ended question such as:

- What does the word "discipline" mean to you?
- How do you and your colleagues handle discipline?
- What are some difficulties you experience in guiding children's behavior?
- What guidance strategies do you find most effective?
- What does your discipline policy tell parents?

II. Discuss the Key Topics

A. Introduce the three major skills that competent teachers use to guide children's behaviors:

- providing an environment that encourages self-discipline;
- using positive methods to guide individual children; and
- helping children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways.

B. Lead a discussion about the key topics using questions such as the following to encourage participation.

- How do children use self-discipline?

  Possible responses:
  - *To make decisions for themselves*
  - *To solve their own problems*
  - *To correct their mistakes*
  - *To do what is right without someone telling them what to do*
  - *To take responsibility for their own actions*
  - *To learn the rules for living in our society*

- What are some of the reasons children misbehave?

  Possible responses:
  - *They want to test the limits set by adults.*
  - *The program's schedule doesn't meet their needs.*
  - *The rules at home are different from those at the program.*
  - *A family situation is upsetting them.*
  - *They need attention but don't know how to ask for it.*
  - *They miss their parents.*
  - *They are tired, hungry, or ill.*
  - *They feel afraid or insecure.*
  - *They want to do things for themselves.*

III. Review the Three Sets of Examples

A. Review the examples of teachers "providing an environment that encourages self-discipline."

- Ask participants to offer examples of how their indoor and outdoor environment encourages children's self-discipline.
- Discuss the short situation and responses to the questions. Ask participants:
  - How do you feel about the way the teacher handled this situation?
  - How would you handle a similar situation in your program?

B. Review the examples of teachers "using positive methods to guide individual children."

- Ask participants to describe the positive methods they use to guide children.
- Discuss the short situation and responses to the questions. Ask participants:
  - How do you feel about the way the teacher handled this situation?
  - How would you handle a similar situation in your program?

C. Review the examples of teachers "helping children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways."

- Ask participants what they do to help children understand and express their feelings in acceptable ways.
- Discuss the short situation and responses to the questions. Ask participants:
  - How do you feel about the way the teacher handled this situation?
  - How would you handle a similar situation in your program?

IV. Discuss "Your Own Self-Discipline"

Lead a discussion about the ways adults use self-discipline, using questions such as the following to encourage participation.

- How does self-discipline affect your own behavior?

  Possible responses:
  - *It guides my behavior at work, at home, and in society.*
  - *It helps me feel good about myself.*
  - *It lets me respond automatically because I have learned and accepted certain rules of behavior and want to avoid certain consequences.*

- How does your self-discipline affect your work with children?

  Possible responses:
  - *Modeling self-discipline helps children learn acceptable ways to behave.*
  - *Being in control of my behavior leads to greater self-esteem, which may make me more effective and skilled.*

V. End the Session

Answer questions. Return completed overviews and pre-training assessments. Schedule individual meetings or phone conferences to discuss responses and the three to five skills and topics teachers hope to learn more about.

Learning Activity I: Using Your Knowledge of Child Development to Guide Behavior

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I. Open the Session

Ask teachers to share examples of techniques they use to guide the behavior of preschoolers.

II. Discuss the Text

Ask questions such as the following to encourage participants to discuss the text:

- How can knowledge of child development help you guide behavior?

  Possible responses:
  - *I will have more realistic expectations of children's abilities.*
  - *I can provide guidance that reflects developmental characteristics.*

- How do the milestones defined by Dr. Stanley Greenspan serve as the foundation for developing self-discipline and positive behavior?

  Possible responses:
  - *When children feel secure and are able to look, listen, and be calm, they can get involved in their play and activities.*

  - *When children feel warm and close to others, they enjoy playing alone and in small groups.*

  - *When children can intentionally communicate without words, they are able to accurately "read" other people's expectations, desires, and feelings and respond appropriately.*

  - *When children can create mental pictures of what they want, need, or feel, they have the ability to use words to express their feelings to themselves and to others.*

  - *When children understand how one idea or feeling relates to another, they recognize the consequences of their actions, learn to handle frustration, can wait for future rewards, and work hard at difficult tasks.*

III. Review the Activity

Reinforce the important connections between "What Preschool Children Are Like" and guidance strategies that help children learn self-discipline. Invite teachers to share examples of guidance strategies that respond to the developmental characteristics of preschoolers, as noted on their completed charts. When appropriate, offer examples from your own observations of how teachers guide the behavior of preschoolers.

IV. Offer Additional Resources/Activities

Provide poster board and markers so teachers can make charts similar to those in this learning activity. Suggest that teachers post them in an area such as the staff lounge so they and their colleagues can add additional examples of what preschoolers are like and ways to use this information to promote self-discipline.

V. End the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity.

B. Ask teachers to draw plans of their indoor and outdoor environments, labeling features that promote children's self-discipline, and bring the plans to the next meeting. If possible, teachers could also bring photographs of the classrooms and outdoor areas used by the children.

C. Return teachers' completed activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

Learning Activity II: Creating an Environment That Supports Self-Discipline

I. Open the Session

Ask a volunteer to share an example of a problem behavior that occurs regularly in his or her program. As a group, analyze and suggest strategies for addressing the problem behavior using the following questions.

- When and where do problems occur?
- Which children are involved?
- What are the children usually doing?
- In what ways might the environment (e.g., materials, schedule, furniture arrangement) be causing the problem?
- How could the environment be changed to alleviate the problem?

II. Discuss the Text

Ask teachers to share the plans and/or photographs of their classrooms and outdoor areas and discuss how different features promote self-discipline. Discuss the positive behaviors that different features promote. Consider making a handout of the chart.

Feature of Environment	Positive Behavior
There are individual, labeled cubbies within children's reach.	Children store and take care of their belongings and know that items in other children's cubbies are off limits.
The daily schedule is posted at children's eye level.	Children feel secure because they know when each day's activities will take place.
Paper towels, sponges, and brooms are stored within children's reach.	Children clean up after themselves.
Materials used together are stored together.	Clean-up time goes smoothly as children know where things are stored.
Materials are stored where children can reach them.	Children choose their own play materials without asking for assistance from the teachers.
There are private areas where children can get away for a while.	Children relax, take a break, regain control, relieve stress, or get away from the group for a while.
There are clearly defined spaces for different activities and clear traffic patterns.	Children get involved in their play and stay out of each other's way.
The outdoor area supports a variety of activities.	Children use their physical skills and enjoy familiar activities in a different setting.
There is space for indoor physical activities.	Children can safely use their large muscles without getting in each other's way.

III. Review the Activity

A. Ask teachers to share their responses to "Arranging the Environment to Promote Self-Discipline," and compare them to those provided at the end of the module.

B. Discuss problem behaviors encountered by teachers. Have teachers suggest ways that changing the environment might eliminate such behaviors.

C. Encourage teachers to help each other develop solutions.

IV. Offer Additional Resources/Activities

A. Show slides or photographs illustrating arrangements of furniture and materials that promote self-discipline.

B. Encourage teachers to visit each other's rooms and outdoor areas and share ideas.

V. End the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity.

B. Return teachers' completed activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

Learning Activity III: Guiding Children's Behavior

I. Opening

A. Begin this session by asking teachers to think about the differences between punishment and discipline. Cover these key points (page 173, Volume II).

- Punishment means controlling children's behavior through fear. Punishment makes children behave because they are afraid of what might happen to them if they don't.

- Discipline means guiding and directing children toward acceptable behavior. The most important goal of discipline is to help children learn how to control their own behavior.

B. Discuss the effects of punishment versus discipline. Cover the following key points.

- Punishment may stop children's negative behavior temporarily, but it doesn't help children develop self-discipline. Instead, it may reinforce their bad feelings about themselves.

- Children learn self-control through daily interactions with adults and each other. It takes a long time to learn self-discipline, but it is time well spent. Children who are self-disciplined tend to be more successful in school and in life.

II. Discuss the Text

Ask questions such as the following to encourage participants to discuss the text:

- What might children be expressing through their behaviors?

  Possible responses:
  - *I feel lonely because . . . .*
  - *I am angry because . . . .*
  - *I am afraid the other children will laugh at me.*
  - *I want to be good at something.*
  - *I need some limits.*
  - *I can't do what you asked me to do.*

- What are some positive guidance approaches you have used that help children develop self-discipline?

  Possible responses:
  - *Help children solve their own problems.*
  - *Anticipate problem behaviors and plan ways to avoid them.*
  - *Focus on the behavior, not the child.*
  - *Be polite to children at all times.*
  - *Gain control of your own angry feelings before disciplining a child.*
  - *Individualize rules and limits when needed to meet a child's needs.*
  - *Help children understand the consequences of their behavior and help them make amends.*

III. Review the Activity

A. Ask pairs or small groups of teachers to share what they learned while keeping track of how they guide the behavior of an individual child. Ask them to discuss how the positive guidance strategies they used met the criteria listed below.

- They were based on realistic expectations for children's behavior.
- They reflect an understanding of child development.
- They reflect an understanding of this child's unique characteristics.
- They were individualized to match the situation and the child's skills and needs.

B. Ask each pair or group to present what they learned from their discussion. Address teachers' questions and unresolved areas of disagreement.

IV. Offer Additional Resources/Activities

Share books such as those listed in the Orientation section of Volume I, pages 12 and 13, that reinforce the importance of using a developmentally appropriate approach to guidance. Discuss ways to involve parents as partners in helping children learn self-discipline.

V. End the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity.

B. Ask teachers if have access to tape players. Suggest that they tape themselves interacting with children.

C. Return teachers' completed activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

Learning Activity IV: Using Words to Provide Positive Guidance

I. Opening

Begin this session by asking teachers to think about when they were children:

- How did you feel when an adult yelled or used harsh words?
- How did you feel when an adult spoke quietly, using a firm tone of voice?

II. Discuss the Text

A. Ask questions such as the following to encourage participants to discuss the text:

- Why are your words and tone of voice powerful guidance tools?

  Possible responses:
  - *When children hear angry, insensitive words they may feel sad, ashamed, or angry.*
  - *When children hear caring words they tend to understand their own feelings and those of others.*

- What are some guidelines for using words to guide children's behavior?

  Possible responses:
  - *Use a natural but firm tone of voice so children feel safe and cared for.*
  - *Get close enough to children so you can speak at a normal level.*
  - *Crouch or kneel at a child's level when having a private discussion.*
  - *Look into a child's eyes and gently touch an arm or shoulder.*
  - *Give the child your full attention and make sure you have his or her attention.*
  - *Be sensitive to cultural differences.*

B. Use an example offered by a teacher, or one from your observations to demonstrate how to use clear statements to explain to children what they can and cannot do.

- Describe what happened.
- Tell the child what behavior is not acceptable.
- Tell the child what behavior is acceptable.
- Suggest a consequence and, if appropriate, a way to make amends.

III. Review the Activity

A. Have teachers work with one or two others to share their responses to the situations in the learning activity: How are the responses similar? How are they different?

B. Ask each team to present what team members learned from one another. Discuss any questions, unresolved areas, or areas of disagreement.

IV. Offer Additional Resources/Activities

If teachers have brought recordings of their conversations with children, invite them to share these with the group. Lead a discussion pointing out positive interactions captured on tape.

V. End the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity.

B. Return teachers' completed activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

Learning Activity V: Setting Rules and Limits

I. Open the Session

Ask teachers to share a rule from their programs. Write the rules on chart paper. Ask:

- How do these rules help children develop self-discipline?
- How do these rules allow teachers to implement a developmentally appropriate program?
- How do you know that a rule is or is not working?
- How are children involved in setting rules?
- How do you help children understand the reasons for the rules?

II. Discuss the Text

Ask questions such as the following to encourage participants to discuss the text:

- Why is it important to have rules and limits?

  Possible responses:
  - *Rules and limits help teachers and children agree on behaviors that are acceptable and those that are not.*
  - *When they know adults will enforce rules and limits consistently, children feel safe and freer to explore and experiment.*

- Why is it important to have just enough rules?

  Possible responses:
  - *When there are too many rules children can't remember them and feel inadequate.*
  - *When there are too few rules the children might be unsafe and the environment disorderly.*
  - *Children feel a sense of mastery when they can remember and follow a few simple rules.*

- Why is it important to involve children in creating rules?

  Possible responses:
  - *Children are more likely to remember and follow rules they have helped to create.*
  - *Children are more likely to understand why rules are needed if they helped set them.*

- When is it appropriate to individualize the rules?

  Possible response:
  - *"Bending" the rules may help teachers meet a child's unique needs.*

- Why is it important to review and revise the rules periodically?

  Possible responses:
  - *As children grow and mature they can handle more freedom, activities, and responsibility.*
  - *Rules that were once needed to keep children safe may now be getting in the way of their growth and independence.*

III. Review the Activity

A. Have teachers turn the rules they listed in this activity into positive statements that remind children of what to do.

B. Ask for volunteers to share the examples of "Rules for the Preschool Room," and their responses to the questions on page 188-189 of Volume II. Stress the importance of respecting and acknowledging children's feelings.

IV. Additional Resources/Activities

Ask teachers to work in pairs to share and discuss the rules in place in their program. Have participants rewrite rules as needed to make them positive statements and to identify rules that might not be necessary or might need revisions to reflect children's growth and maturity.

V. Ending the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity and summarizing your progress.

B. Return teachers' completed activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

Learning Activity VI: Responding to Challenging Behaviors and Summarizing Your Progress

I. Opening

Introduce the topic by asking questions such as the following:

- Why do we use the term "challenging" instead of "bad" or "problem" behavior?
- How do you handle challenging behaviors such as kicking, swearing, and temper tantrums?
- Have you tried any of the suggestions in this learning activity? If so, what happened?

II. Discuss the Text

Ask questions such as the following to encourage participants to discuss the text:

- What challenging behaviors have you encountered?
- What do you think the children were trying to express through their behavior?
- Have you identified any of the following reasons for the behavior?
    - is affected by a physical condition
    - doesn't know what he or she is supposed to do
    - needs more attention than he or she is getting
    - feels bored or confined
    - is seeking more control of the situation
    - feels frustrated or discouraged
- If so, how did you respond to the child?

III. Review the Activity

Ask for volunteers to discuss their experiences completing this learning activity. To maintain confidentiality, teachers should not use the child's name. Focus on the process used to identify the cause of the challenging behavior and to develop a plan for responding at home and at the program.

IV. Additional Resources/Activities

Invite a mental health specialist to your session to share strategies for helping children learn appropriate ways to express their feelings.

V. Summarizing Your Progress

A. Ask teachers to share something they learned while working on this module.

B. Ask teachers to share some of the ways they adapted or changed their approach to discipline. How have children reacted? How have parents responded to the revised strategies?

VI. End the Session

A. Return teachers' completed activities and summarizing your progress forms with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

B. Schedule individual meetings with teachers to review their progress and schedule the knowledge and competency assessments.

Chapter V

Assessing Each Teacher's Progress

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Chapter V

Assessing Each Teacher's Progress

This chapter includes:

- Guidance on administering the knowledge assessments
- Guidance on conducting the competency assessments
- Instructions for scoring the assessment
- Strategies for discussing assessment results
- Knowledge assessments
- Competency assessment observation forms

Because *Caring for Preschool Children* is competency-based, the training program includes materials and procedures for assessing teachers' knowledge and competence. Knowledge assessments validate a teacher's understanding of the information presented in the module. Competency assessments allow the individual to demonstrate competence by applying his or her skills while working with children. For each module, the criteria for the competency assessment are drawn from the pre-training assessment, and most are observable and measurable. Modules 1 through 12 include both knowledge and competency assessments. Module 13 has a knowledge assessment only since mastery of the skills developed through this module cannot be readily determined during an observation period.

Trainers administer the assessments after teachers have successfully completed all parts of a module—the overview and pre-training assessment, the learning activities, and summarizing your progress. During individual meetings, the trainer and teacher discuss the responses to summarizing your progress and review the skills listed on the pre-training assessment for the module. You jointly discuss and decide whether the teacher is ready for assessment. (Having provided feedback on all the learning activities, you will already have a good idea whether an individual is ready.) If a teacher is not ready for assessment, you can suggest repeating one or more learning activities or provide additional training resources. If the decision is to proceed with the assessments, schedule a time to administer them.

The assessment process is designed as one more learning experience. If a teacher seems anxious explain that continued support is available if his or her performance on either assessment is not successful. Reassure the individual that there will be additional opportunities to gain the necessary knowledge and skills.

Trainers will need to maintain a supply of the assessments; therefore, it might be helpful to set up a filing system for storing copies of the knowledge assessments and answer sheets and the competency assessment observation forms.

Administering the Knowledge Assessments

The knowledge assessments are paper-and-pencil exercises that test knowledge of the information and concepts presented in the module. The questions, which are based on the overview and learning activities, include multiple-choice, matching, short-answer, and true/false formats. Most teachers will need approximately 20 to 30 minutes of uninterrupted time to complete the knowledge assessment. You can administer it before or after the competency assessment. Some trainers choose to make this an open-book test.

It may have been a long a time since some teachers have taken a test. Remind them to read each question completely before attempting to answer it. Also, suggest that they go back and review all of their answers before turning in the assessment. This should help them catch mistakes made because they wrote on the wrong line or misread a question.

Conducting Competency Assessments

A competency assessment is a scheduled, objective, and systematic observation of a teacher while he or she works with children. Each competency assessment focuses on the skills addressed in the module. The competency assessment observation forms appear at the end of this chapter. The forms for each module include two pages for notes, followed by a list of assessment criteria. There are spaces to indicate whether each criterion has been met, partially met, or not met.

Trainers can conduct the observation in the morning or afternoon, depending on the day's activities and the skills being observed, and provide feedback on both assessments immediately or the next day. The recommended observation period is one hour, but this may vary depending on the time of day, what the children are doing, and the scheduled and unscheduled activities that take place. You may want to observe at a particular time of day so you can witness a specific routine or activity (for example, you might want to observe arrival or departure times or outdoor play). For several modules the competency assessment should be conducted at a specific time.

- Module 1, Safe requires observation of an emergency drill.
- Module 11, Families, involves observation of drop-off or pick-up times.
- Module 12, Program Management includes observation of a teachers' planning meeting.

The competency assessments observation forms for Modules 1, 2, 3, and 10 begin with several items related to the environment and procedures. Trainers assess these criteria by reviewing documentation, looking at the environment, and questioning the teacher. They should be assessed immediately prior to the observation period.

Documenting the Observation

Your documentation of the observation is an important aspect of the competency assessment. It should provide a picture of how the teacher interacts with and responds to children. It is not possible to capture everything that takes place, but it is important to record as much as possible because this data will be used to determine competence. Observation notes should provide objective descriptions of what you observed so you can share specific information with the teacher.

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Useful observation notes are:

- **Accurate:** Provide a factual and exact description of the teacher's and children's actions and words. Record actions and words in the order in which they happen. Be specific. Try to include direct quotes whenever possible.
- **Objective:** Include only the facts. Do not use labels, judgments, or inferences.
- **Complete:** Present a detailed picture of the setting, the number and ages of children, the teacher's actions, and the children's verbal and nonverbal responses. Note the number of children involved. Describe the area in which the action is taking place and the materials and equipment in use. Include descriptions of activities from beginning to end.

Scoring the Assessments

Most adults are eager to know the results of their work. It is important to score the assessments and share the results with the teacher as soon as possible.

The answer sheets for the knowledge assessments (see Appendix B) indicate how to score each question. When a question has more than one possible correct response, this is noted on the answer sheets. A perfect score is 100. To complete the knowledge assessment successfully, a teacher must obtain a score of at least 80 percent.

Here is a sample rating page of the competency assessment observation form for Module 10, Guidance.

MODULE 10: GUIDANCE

Prior to the observation period, assess the following criteria.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Make sure there are no safety hazards.

[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Store toys and equipment on low open shelves.

[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

To score the competency assessment, go over your notes from the observation and others conducted in the past month. Use your notes to decide whether each criterion of competence was met, partially met, or not met. If you did not observe a criterion, leave the rating blank.

Next, review your ratings and decide if you think the teacher has successfully demonstrated competence.

Discussing the Results

Schedule a meeting with the teacher to discuss the answers to the knowledge assessment and what you saw and heard during the competency assessment observation period. Keep in mind that the purpose of the assessment process is to validate a teacher's understanding and application of the knowledge and skills presented in the module. In most cases, teachers already know if they have mastered the needed knowledge and skills. If appropriate, use the meeting as an opportunity to reassess training needs and to provide additional support.

If the teacher has achieved a score of at least 80 percent on the knowledge assessment, offer your congratulations and briefly review any incorrect responses. If the teacher has not achieved a passing score, take your time going over the questions and answers so you can assess how much support the teacher needs to understand fully the material presented in the module. As stated earlier, the goal is to ensure competence and understanding, not simply to have the teacher pass the test. You might have the teacher repeat specific learning activities or read additional training resources.

Here is a suggested approach to discussing the competency assessment results.

- **Begin by asking for the teacher's comments.** "How do you feel about what took place?" "Did everything go as you had planned?" "Were there any surprises?"
- **Sort out what went well and what problems existed, if any.** "What do you think went well?" "Is there anything you would want to do differently?"
- **Share your observation notes with the teacher.** "Let's look at my notes on what happened and see what we can learn from them."
- **Review the criteria together.** Ask the teacher to assess which skills were clearly demonstrated and which ones were not.
- **Give your decision and explain the reasoning behind it.**
  - If the teacher has clearly demonstrated competence, appears to understand the information, and can apply it consistently in working with children, offer congratulations and take a few minutes to share observations of his or her progress.
  - If the teacher has not met the criteria for competence, state your decision and explain why you think he or she needs more time to develop the necessary skills. Give examples from your observation notes. Ask what form of support would be most helpful and develop a plan to work together. Assure the teacher that he or she can redo the competency assessment after spending further time building skills.

As teachers work on other modules, consider periodically reviewing their competence in using the skills developed in previous ones. There may be times when your observations indicate that a teacher needs to repeat a module or at least some of the learning activities as a "skill refresher."

The following section includes copies of the knowledge assessments for all 13 modules and the competency assessment observation forms for Modules 1 through 12. Appendix B contains answer sheets for the knowledge assessments.

Knowledge Assessments

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 1: SAFE

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Below is the Code of Ethical Conduct of the National Association of the Education of Young Children (Principle 1.1)*. Briefly explain how this principle guides your daily experiences with children.

   "Above all we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitive, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to children."

2. For each of the following interest areas, list **two** ways to keep the area safe.

   Art
   a.

   b.

   Sand and Water
   c.

   d.

   Cooking
   e.

   f.

3. List **two** examples of items to check daily to maintain safety indoors.

   a.

   b.

---

* Stephanie Feeney and Kenneth Kipnis, *Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment* (Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1990), p. 5.

4. Think of an emergency situation that might arise at the program. List two things teachers could do to keep children safe in that situation.

Emergency situation: ____________________

a.

b.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

5. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like		**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Safe**
a. ___ They have lots of energy and run, hop, and jump.	(1)	Use butter knives for meals and sharp child-sized knives for cooking. Provide sturdy tools children can use with success. Store tools when not in use. Demonstrate how to use tools safely and involve children in setting safety rules. Limit the number of children in cooking and woodworking areas at one time and offer close supervision.
b. ___ They throw, kick, and catch objects.	(2)	Provide an area where children can throw and kick soft objects without hurting others. Remind children to kick and throw balls and bean bags, not sand, toys, and other items that could cause injuries.
c. ___ They use tools such as knives, scissors, and woodworking equipment.	(3)	Set up the indoor and outdoor areas so children can move freely without bumping into each other or the furniture and equipment. Limit running to the outdoor area or a supervised hallway, and offer frequent, positive reminders: "Walk inside." Provide energy outlets indoors such as a climber or a movement activity.
d. ___ They begin to understand cause and effect.	(4)	Involve children in discussing and setting safety rules and limits—for example, height limits for block structures. Use positive statements as reminders. Point out potential hazards and discuss what might happen if they are not removed or avoided.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to letter with the best response.

6. To keep children safe while outdoors in an electrical storm,
    - a. ___ find the nearest tree to stand under.
    - b. ___ cluster together.
    - c. ___ find a wooden or metal shed to go into.
    - d. ___ seek shelter in a vehicle or low area.

7. To keep children safe after an earthquake,
    - a. ___ turn on lights to see if anyone is injured.
    - b. ___ go outside if inside a building.
    - c. ___ light candles.
    - d. ___ turn on a transistor radio and wait for emergency instructions.

8. When walking with children in traffic,
    - a. ___ cross in the middle of the street.
    - b. ___ pay attention to the younger children, let the older ones walk alone.
    - c. ___ obey the traffic signals most of the time.
    - d. ___ explain to the children what you are doing and why.

9. To help children learn to keep themselves safe,
    - a. ___ make sure children memorize all the safety rules.
    - b. ___ restrict most of the activities.
    - c. ___ apply rules consistently and praise children who follow them.
    - d. ___ let children make mistakes so they'll learn what will happen if they do not follow the rules.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 2: HEALTHY

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. List **two** of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

   a.

   b.

2. List **two** things that you do daily to minimize the spread of germs in your classroom.

   a.

   b.

3. Explain why cooking is a good learning opportunity for preschool children.

4. Describe family-style eating.

5. List **two** things you do to promote your own health and nutrition.

   a.

   b.

6. What should you do if you suspect a child in the program is being abused or neglected?

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

7. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Keep Children Healthy**
a. ___ They can dress themselves.	(1) Show children you care about being healthy and eating good foods so that they will learn by imitating you.
b. ___ They learn by observing and imitating adults.	(2) Encourage children to dress themselves. Remind them to wear jackets outdoors when it is cold so that they will not become chilled.
c. ___ They can use the toilet and wash their hands.	(3) Remind children to use the toilet as needed. Be sure there is always a supply of soap, paper towels, and toilet paper in the bathroom so they can take care of their own physical needs.
d. ___ They can pour from small pitchers and use utensils properly.	(4) Serve family-style meals. Encourage children to serve themselves so that they will learn how to select proper foods.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

8. HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) can be transmitted by
   a. ___ sexual intercourse with someone infected with HIV.
   b. ___ sharing the bathroom with someone with HIV.
   c. ___ hugging and kissing an HIV-infected person.
   d. ___ being in the same room with an HIV-infected person.

9. Teachers and children should wash their hands
   a. ___ before outdoor play.
   b. ___ two or three times a day.
   c. ___ after using the bathroom.
   d. ___ only when dirty.

10. Teachers can help children develop healthy habits by
   a. ___ telling them to eat everything on their plates.
   b. ___ offering a variety of healthy foods for meals and snacks.
   c. ___ eating separately from the children.
   d. ___ cleaning up after the children.

11. A sign of possible child abuse or neglect might be
   a. ___ not buying a child the kind of shoes he wants.
   b. ___ disciplining a child firmly, but gently.
   c. ___ ridiculing and belittling a child.
   d. ___ allowing a child to make choices.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Describe how to arrange the environment to convey the message: "You belong here and we like you."

2. Describe what children do in one indoor interest area.

Interest area: ______________________________

3. Explain why and how you would like to improve an interest area in your classroom.

Interest area: ______________________________

4. List **two** ways teachers can help transitions go smoothly.

a.

b.

5. List **two** items that children might use in each of the following interest areas.

Table Toys
a.

b.

Sand and Water
a.

b.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like		How Teachers Can Use This Information to Create a Learning Environment
a. ___ They enjoy large motor activities such as running, jumping, climbing, and riding tricycles.	(1)	Decide on jobs children can do alone or with adult help and make a job chart. Make name cards to show who has each job (for example, feeding pets, watering plants, setting tables, passing out snacks).
b. ___ They are learning to share and take turns.	(2)	Provide duplicates of some popular toys and materials. Show children how long they have to wait. Use a clock or a timer, or write their names on a list to help them learn to share.
c. ___ They like to be helpful.	(3)	Carefully organize materials. Put things together that are used together (for example, crayons and markers near drawing paper). Make picture labels to put on shelves to show where items belong, to help children see that everything has a place.
d. ___ They can take responsibility for keeping the classroom orderly.	(4)	Set aside an indoor area for large play equipment. Plan some activities that use large muscles (for example, pounding clay or dough, woodworking). Make sure the outdoor area is safe for running and climbing.

Multiple Choice. Write X on the line next to the best response.

7. A good schedule for children includes
   a. ___ outdoor as well as indoor time.
   b. ___ large group activity at all times.
   c. ___ five minutes for cleaning up.
   d. ___ mostly indoor time.

8. In an environment that invites children to explore and try out ideas,
   a. ___ routines follow a consistent order.
   b. ___ pillows or a stuffed chair are in a corner.
   c. ___ child-sized furniture is provided.
   d. ___ attractive displays of materials invite children to use them.

9. If your learning environment is attractive and well-organized,
   - a. ___ you may enjoy working more and your job may be easier.
   - b. ___ the children will be afraid to touch anything.
   - c. ___ you will have to spend many after-work hours putting things away.
   - d. ___ you will spend more time on arranging things and less on developmentally appropriate activities.

10. The outdoor play area
    - a. ___ should be used only during warm-weather months.
    - b. ___ is for activities that call for large motor development only.
    - c. ___ can be divided into interest areas for different types of activities.
    - d. ___ is a place where children can take a break from the program and doesn't need teacher supervision.

Knowledge Assessments

MODULE 4: PHYSICAL

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Explain how children's physical fitness is related to their self-esteem.

2. Give **one** example for each of the following skills:

   a. Object control:

   b. Locomotor:

   c. Nonlocomotor:

3. Give **three** examples of ways children can develop their fine motor skills in the library area.

   a.

   b.

   c.

4. Change the following into positive, encouraging statements:

   a. "You need to use your legs harder to swing. You're not trying hard enough."

   b. "You're running faster, but you still can't you run as fast as Sheila."

5. Are there any age-appropriate gross motor activities that you shy away from doing with the children? Why? What can you do to change your feelings about these activities?

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

	What Preschool Children Are Like		How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Children's Physical Development
a. ____	They climb.	(1)	Lead activities in which children can move their bodies to music with different rhythms. Teach children some dance movements and plan experiences where children can create their own movements.
b. ____	They move to music, imitate dance movements, and make up creative ways to move.	(2)	Allow adequate time for children to use indoor and outdoor climbing equipment. Encourage children who are learning to climb so they feel competent and are not frustrated or fearful.
c. ____	They string beads, lace, zip, and weave.	(3)	Have clay and play dough available in the art area every day. Encourage children to roll, pinch, squeeze, pound, and pull so they can refine finger movements.
d. ____	They manipulate objects with their hands and fingers to see how objects fit together and work.	(4)	Provide fabric with zippers, yarn, string, laces, beads, spools, and other materials for children to practice stringing, lacing, weaving, and self-help skills.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. Which of the following is most typical of three-year-olds?
   a. ___ They like to run, gallop, and dance to music.
   b. ___ They don't like trying new things.
   c. ___ They are skillful at climbing.
   d. ___ They are well-coordinated.

8. Which of the following is most typical of four-year-olds?
   a. ___ They are well-coordinated.
   b. ___ They enjoy hopping and skipping.
   c. ___ They aren't very social.
   d. ___ They have very good fine motor control.

9. Which of the following is most typical of five-year olds?
   a. ___ They are well-coordinated.
   b. ___ Their running and walking movements may have sudden starts and stops.
   c. ___ They can walk upstairs using alternate feet.
   d. ___ They can throw and catch a ball with success.

10. What should a teacher do to encourage and guide children?
   a. ___ Compare one child's progress to another child's.
   b. ___ Help children learn to do large motor activities safely.
   c. ___ Stay away from children who attempt new skills so as not to embarrass them.
   d. ___ Tell all children they must walk the balance beam without any help.

Knowledge Assessments

MODULE 5: COGNITIVE

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. List **two** ways teachers can encourage children's problem-solving skills.

    a.

    b.

2. Define the following cognitive skills.

    a. Classification

    b. Sequencing

    c. Understanding cause and effect

3. Define the following types of play.

    a. Functional

    b. Socio-dramatic

    c. Constructive

4. List **two** materials you would include in one interest area to promote children's cognitive development. Explain why you would provide each material.

Interest area: ______________________________

Materials:

a.

b.

5. List two props used for sand and water play. Describe how you encourage children to construct their own knowledge using these materials.

a.

b.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Children's Cognitive Development
a.___ They have rapidly expanding vocabularies—they can name many things and explain their ideas.	(1) Offer new props and materials that build on children's play themes. Create prop boxes tied to themes of interest to the children. Step into a dramatic play role to comment or make suggestions that will lead the children to a higher level of play.
b.___ They learn by using their imaginations—in dramatic play and other activities.	(2) Take children's questions seriously. Ask questions to find out what they really want to know. Give answers they can understand and ask more questions to stretch their thinking. Model ways to use books and other resources to find answers.
c.___ They believe there is a purpose for everything and ask many questions: "Why?" "How?" "What?"	(3) Provide a variety of appealing table toys and interesting materials, such as rocks, shells, buttons, and keys. Comment on what children are doing: "You made a row of red pegs." "You lined up the rocks by size, from large to small."
d.___ They learn to match, classify, and identify shape and colors by playing with toys and objects.	(4) Introduce new words for vocabulary building. Provide names for objects, feelings, places, events, and so on. Talk with children and encourage them to describe their activities, feelings, and ideas.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. A question that promotes children's thinking and problem solving is
   - a. ___ What else could we try?
   - b. ___ What color is this?
   - c. ___ What letter is this?
   - d. ___ How many apples are there?

8. Children ask lots of questions because they
   - a. ___ want to keep the teacher busy answering them.
   - b. ___ wants adults to think they're smart.
   - c. ___ are curious and want to understand the world around them.
   - d. ___ aren't very bright and can't help asking.

9. Cognitive development is
   - a. ___ a set of skills learned through formal education.
   - b. ___ the process of learning to think and reason.
   - c. ___ the ability to take tests.
   - d. ___ the collective sum of information a person knows.

10. When a child calls a worm a *caterpillar,* the child is
    - a. ___ making a mistake.
    - b. ___ noticing the ways in which a worm and caterpillar are alike.
    - c. ___ obviously not ready to learn the differences.
    - d. ___ not advanced in cognitive development.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 6: COMMUNICATION

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. List **two** ways teachers can encourage children to practice and expand their language skills.

   a.

   b.

2. Describe how you observe and promote children's listening and speaking skills.

3. List **two** conversation rules.

   a.

   b.

4. List **two** ways teachers can help children expand their vocabularies and understanding of language.

   a.

   b.

5. List **two** characteristics of appropriate books for young preschool children.

   a.

   b.

6. List **two** characteristics of appropriate books for older preschool children.

   a.

   b.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column..

7. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Communication**
a ____ They scribble and write invented letters and words.	(1) Print and post signs, job charts, and stories to provide important information. Label cubbies, containers, shelves, and interest areas. On a neighborhood walk, point out traffic signs and signs on buildings. Offer writing materials in a separate area and in all interest areas.
b. ____ They can memorize songs, poems, rhymes, and books with repetition.	(2) Ask children to read what they have written so you can understand what they know about writing. Accept their writing without pointing out mistakes or making corrections.
c. ____ They learn most rules of grammar without direct instruction. They may make mistakes because there are exceptions to a rule.	(3) Accept children's use of language, without pointing out mistakes. Restate children's words using standard language. Serve as a model for standard use of language.
d. ____ They are learning that printed words are symbols for spoken words and convey messages.	(4) Read books with repeated words and phrases again and again, until children know what comes next and join in. Ask parents to share their favorite poems, songs, and rhymes. Make up songs and rhymes about the children and classroom life.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

8. What is one way teachers can help children learn to use language effectively?
    - a. ___ Use complete sentences and model standard use of language.
    - b. ___ Gently but firmly correct a child who misuses words or grammar.
    - c. ___ Arrange for children to watch television when they are not engaged in activities.
    - d. ___ Do nothing special, because children will learn on their own.

9. Which of these is a sign of a possible speech disorder?
    - a. ___ A child laughs a lot.
    - b. ___ A child stutters every once in a while.
    - c. ___ A child uses mostly vowel sounds.
    - d. ___ A child speaks more than one language.

10. Which of the following is a stage in learning to read?
    - a. ___ learning to recite the alphabet
    - b. ___ exploring books
    - c. ___ watching television
    - d. ___ memorizing flash cards

11. Which is a good criterion for choosing books for preschool children?
    - a. ___ Books should introduce unfamiliar topics.
    - b. ___ Books should have few illustrations.
    - c. ___ Books should be humorous and sometimes include surprise endings.
    - d. ___ Books should be small.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 7: CREATIVE

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Write a definition of creativity.

2. Describe a music and movement activity you do with children. Explain how the activity promotes their creativity.

3. List **four** items that children can use for art activities.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

4. Describe something you did recently that was creative. Use your definition from question 1 to explain why your action was creative.

5. List **two** rhythm instruments preschool children enjoy using.

   a.

   b.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like		How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Children's Creativity
a. ___ Their small muscle skills and eye-hand coordination are becoming more refined.	(1)	Observe children's dramatic play to learn what they are doing. Provide new materials and offer indirect suggestions to extend children's play or move it in slightly different directions.
b. ___ They use dramatic play as an outlet for their creativity.	(2)	Provide a variety of tools and equipment such as brushes, markers, crayons, scissors, rhythm instruments, sand and water props, beads and strings, and a computer keyboard.
c. ___ They gain and use information about objects and events in the environment.	(3)	Include open-ended materials that invite children to explore and make discoveries in all of the indoor and outdoor interest areas.
d. ___ They find ways to be creative in every activity and routine.	(4)	Provide objects and materials that encourage children to move, dig, build, fill, empty, and use their senses to explore. Answer their many "Why?" questions. Encourage children to make their own discoveries.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. Which of the following is not a developmental stage of art?
   - a. ___ making scribbles on paper
   - b. ___ combining shapes in a realistic way
   - c. ___ drawing basic shapes
   - d. ___ coloring within the lines

8. Which of these ideas could encourage children's creative thinking?
   - a. ___ telling children which of several items will sink in water
   - b. ___ asking what children are doing and insisting they put things back where they belong
   - c. ___ asking children what else they can do with a cup
   - d. ___ having children point out specific tools

9. Which is important when planning and conducting activities that encourage creativity?
    - a. ___ giving detailed instructions
    - b. ___ making a model, so everyone will know what to do
    - c. ___ never commenting on children's work
    - d. ___ trying the activity before introducing it

10. Which of the following activities probably could be considered "creative"?
    - a. ___ baking bread following a recipe
    - b. ___ filling in a picture in a coloring book
    - c. ___ fingerpainting
    - d. ___ putting a puzzle together

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 8: SELF

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Write a definition of self-esteem. Then explain why it is necessary for every child to have a feeling of self-esteem.

2. List **two** ways teachers can get to know about each child.

   a.

   b.

3. Describe how the environment can help children develop independence and a sense of competence.

4. List **two** ways teachers can help children deal with separation.

   a.

   b.

5. Name **two** skills teachers should use when talking with children to build self-esteem.

   a.

   b.

6. Describe how your own sense of self and self-esteem affect your relationships with children in the program.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

7. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like	How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Children's Self-Esteem
a. _____They may express feelings such as anger and jealousy by hitting or kicking.	(1) Create an environment that allows children to take risks safely. For example, put mats under the climber so children won't be hurt if they fall. Offer new materials and activities regularly in response to growing skills and changing interests, and to expose children to new information and concepts.
b. _____They can express feelings verbally using large vocabularies , but may also use "baby talk."	(2) Work with colleagues to develop plans for carrying out routines that allow children to participate according to their abilities. Invite children to help with tasks such as moving furniture, wiping tables, or getting books ready to return to the library.
c. _____They like to help during chores and routines.	(3) Encourage children to use words, rather than physical behaviors to tell each other what they want. If needed, help children express the words that identify their feelings. Provide outlets such as clay and playdough, water play, tearing paper, or moving to music that help children manage strong feelings.
d. _____They like to try new things and take risks.	(4) Allow as much time as children need to express their ideas and feelings. Avoid stepping in to "speak" for them.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

8. What is one way teachers can build children's self-esteem?
   a. ___ They can discipline children who are becoming too independent.
   b. ___ They can expect all children to be at the same skill level.
   c. ___ They can allow children to make choices and support them when they try new things.
   d. ___ They can correct children's mistakes so they won't make them again.

9. Which of the following statements would be likely to build a child's self-esteem?
   a. ___ Do you want to sit in the corner? Then, do what I tell you!
   b. ___ Are you wet again? That's the third time I've changed your shirt this morning.
   c. ___ Everyone has accidents. Get a sponge from the sink so you can wipe your spill.
   d. ___ You are getting on my nerves. Go sit down.

10. Which of the following strategies can teachers use to help children deal with their feelings about separation?
    a. ___ Tell the children to stop fretting.
    b. ___ Make sure parents say good-bye, even if the children cry.
    c. ___ Try to make children forget about their parents during the time they're at the program.
    d. ___ Tell children they are too big to cry.

11. Why is it valuable to repeat activities so that children can practice skillls?
    a. ___ It helps keep children busy for long periods of the day.
    b. ___ It helps children feel successful and competent.
    c. ___ It is not valuable, it is boring for a child and should not be done.
    d. ___ It can harm children's self-esteem.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 9: SOCIAL

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Describe **two** ways to help a shy child learn to make friends.

    a.

    b.

2. Describe **two** ways to help an overly aggressive child make friends.

    a.

    b.

3. List **two** ways teachers can help children learn caring behaviors.

    a.

    b.

4. Describe how your program's environment supports children's social development.

5. List **four** ways to extend children's dramatic play.

    a.

    b.

    c.

    d.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches each statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like	**How Teachers Can Use This Information to Promote Children's Social Development**
a. ____ They help to make and follow simple rules.	(1) Observe to see how often and in what situations a child is excluded by others. Help the child become a part of the group by offering an interesting prop or material to share, suggesting a role to play.
b. ____ They may exclude other children from their play.	(2) Involve children in making the rules for the classroom. Play simple games such as Lotto or Go Fish to help children learn to follow rules in play situations. Offer positive reminders: "Walk indoors, please," to help children follow rules.
c. ____ They ask many questions.	(3) Use questions to engage children in a discussion but answer those that require a direct response. Include others in the discussion.
d. ____ They gain greater awareness of the larger community.	(4) Take the children on trips to the firehouse, parents' work sites, the pet store, the library, and so on. Prepare for trips by discussing what will happen and how children will be expected to behave.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. Which of the following would best help a child learn to make friends?
   a. ___ asking the child why others won't let him or her play
   b. ___ giving the child a task that requires interacting with other children
   c. ___ suggesting the child play with the blocks instead of with others
   d. ___ telling the child to join in and tell the other children to let him or her play

8. Which of the following demonstrates use of a caring behavior?
   a. ___ fingerpainting
   b. ___ wiping up after yourself
   c. ___ giving a possession to another
   d. ___ playing with other children

9. Which of the following is not an example of the programmatic environment?
   a. ___ the daily schedule
   b. ___ activities
   c. ___ group time
   d. ___ parent's address list

10. What is one important way that children learn about how to treat others?
   a. ___ watching television
   b. ___ being told what not to do
   c. ___ watching adults interacting with other adults and children
   d. ___ memorizing rules of behavior

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 10: GUIDANCE

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. Describe the difference between punishment and discipline. Why do you think discipline is preferable to punishment?

2. Rewrite the following statements so they provide positive guidance.

   a. "Hurry up. All the other children have their coats on."

   b. "No, your mother's not here yet. Stop crying."

3. List **four** positive guidance strategies.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

4. List **two** questions you would ask yourself if a child consistently misbehaves. Then, explain how you would find the answers to the questions.

   a.

   b.

5. Describe a challenging behavior that one child in your program displayed and how you helped him or her learn positive ways to behave.

Matching. Choose the numbered item in the right column that best matches the statement in the left column.

6. Write the number on the line.

What Preschool Children Are Like		How Teachers Can Use This Information to Guide Children's Behavior
a. _____ They sometimes lose control; they may scream or strike out in anger at children or adults.	(1)	Notice and comment on children's positive behaviors and accomplishments, such as participating in clean-up, helping a friend, or finishing a difficult puzzle. Try to spend some one-on-one time with each child evey day.
b. _____ They may swear or use bathroom words to get attention or without knowing their meaning.	(2)	Ask children to help you do real chores so they feel useful and competent. Create situations in which children can be leaders: choosing a book for story time; teaching another child how to do something; ringing the bell to let the group know it is almost time to go outdoors.
c. _____ They like to feel powerful and important and they can be bossy.	(3)	Step in immediately to stop the hitting or kicking. Calmly, but firmly say, "Hitting hurts. It's not okay to hit. Use your words to tell him how you feel." Stay with a child until he or she has calmed down and can listen.
d. _____ They seek adult attention and approval.	(4)	It depends on the reasons why children are using these words. Calmly say, "We don't use those words here," and go on to something else. If children seem to be seeking attention, try ignoring them when they use the words. Provide the needed attention at another time.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. The most important goal of discipline is to
   a. ___ make children behave.
   b. ___ get children to do what adults tell them.
   c. ___ help children develop inner controls.
   d. ___ teach behaviors needed for reading.

8. People who are self-disciplined can
   a. ___ make other people behave.
   b. ___ accept the results of their actions.
   c. ___ rationalize their own behavior.
   d. ___ be bossy.

9. Teachers can provide positive guidance by
   a. ___ telling children to be ashamed of themselves.
   b. ___ sticking to a strict schedule for eating, sleeping, and playing.
   c. ___ modeling acceptable ways to express negative feelings.
   d. ___ telling children how to behave and how not to behave.

10. When a child at the water table keeps pouring water on the floor, the teacher should
   a. ___ tell the child he can't play at the water table anymore.
   b. ___ give the child a warning about his behavior.
   c. ___ clean up the spill and make the child sit by himself for 10 minutes.
   d. ___ remind the child of the rules for the water table, then ask him to get the mop to dry up the spill.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 11: FAMILIES

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. List **three** kinds of information parents can share with teachers about their children.

    a.

    b.

    c.

2. List **three** things you can share with parents about their child.

    a.

    b.

    c.

3. Describe what you find most rewarding about working with parents. Explain your response.

4. List **two** ways to keep parents informed about the program.

    a.

    b.

5. List **two** ways to encourage parents to become more involved in the program.

    a.

    b.

6. Describe one step in preparing for and one step in conducting a parent-staff conference.

   a. Preparing:

   b: Conducting:

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. Both parents and teachers
   a. ___ are child development professionals.
   b. ___ know exactly what the child needs.
   c. ___ have genuine concerns for the child's well-being.
   d. ___ always know the reasons for the child's behavior.

8. A major source of stress for families is
   a. ___ the weather.
   b. ___ too much food.
   c. ___ chronic illness of a family member.
   d. ___ too much television.

9. When parents ask for advice about their child, the teacher should
   a. ___ tell the parents what to do.
   b. ___ tell the parents it's against the rules to give advice.
   c. ___ encourage the parents to think about what is best for the child.
   d. ___ avoid giving any kind of answer.

10. Partnerships between parents and teachers are strengthened by
   a. ___ ongoing communication.
   b. ___ keeping the parents out of daily routines.
   c. ___ keeping the relationship as professional and distant as possible.
   d. ___ never giving advice.

True or False. Write *T* if the statement is true. Write *F* if it is false. Then for each statement that is false, rewrite it to be true.

11. _____ Parents are the most important people in children's lives.

12. _____ Teachers should not bother parents by asking them about their children's interests.

13. _____ Teachers are the experts when it comes to knowing about children.

14. _____ Parents feel more involved when they know what is happening at the program.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 12: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. List **two** administrative policies and procedures you follow every day.

   a.

   b.

2. List **two** reasons why you observe children.

   a.

   b.

3. Explain why a portfolio is a good way to document a child's progress.

4. Choose a program element (daily schedule, materials, routines, environment, transitions, small group activities, interactions, and so forth) and explain how you can individualize it.

   Program Element: ____

   Individualizing Strategies:

5. List **two** planning categories that might be helpful for your program. Explain your response.

   a.

   b.

6. List **two** things on which you could focus during an observation of child.

   a.

   b.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

7. To manage a child development program, teachers use
   a. ___ any method they developed that tells them something about children.
   b. ___ a systematic approach.
   c. ___ a skills checklist that they complete at the end of the year.
   d. ___ information provided by psychologists on completing a rating scale on each child.

8. Children's behavior is observed by
   a. ___ teachers only.
   b. ___ parents and teachers.
   c. ___ all people who interact with children.
   d. ___ psychologists trained to observe children.

9. Recordings of children must be objective and
   a. ___ lengthy.
   b. ___ fun.
   c. ___ accurate.
   d. ___ spontaneous.

10. An example from an objective recording is
   a. ___ Derrick is too lazy to throw the ball.
   b. ___ Derrick is an immature boy.
   c. ___ Derrick bounced the ball three times and threw it to Mike.
   d. ___ Derrick did not like the game.

11. An example of what a portfolio might include is
   a. ___ a child's attendance record.
   b. ___ a book made by a child.
   c. ___ a list of the teacher's favorite songs
   d. ___ a copy of the program's policies and procedures.

True or False. Write *T* if the sentence is true. Write *F* if it is false. Then, for each statement that is false, rewrite it to be true.

12. ____ It is best for one person to conduct all observations of a child.

13. ____ Children are constantly growing and changing.

14. ____ To individualize, planning is not as important as being spontaneous.

15. ____ Evaluation is the first step in the planning process.

16. ____ A teacher is a manager.

17. ____ It is a good idea to inform all staff members of the plans you have made by yourself.

Knowledge Assessment

MODULE 13: PROFESSIONALISM

Short Answers. Complete the following exercises. Some require more than one response.

1. What is a professional? Why do you consider yourself a professional?

2. Why is it important to expand your knowledge and professional skills continually?

3. List **two** ways to continue learning.

   a.

   b.

4. For each category, list **two** ways that you can take care of yourself.

   a. Physically
      1.
      2.

   b. Emotionally
      1.
      2.

   c. Socially
      1.
      2.

   d. Intellectually
      1.
      2.

Multiple Choice. Write *X* on the line next to the best response.

5. Setting goals for your professional growth
    a. ___ makes you feel like you are making progress.
    b. ___ guarantees you will make progress.
    c. ___ is a waste of time when you have a lot of resources available.
    d. ___ should only include things you are already good at.

6. An example of an ethical teacher behavior is
    a. ___ avoiding children you don't like.
    b. ___ wearing comfortable old jeans and a torn sweatshirt to work.
    c. ___ comforting a child who misses his or her parents.
    d. ___ talking about a child's temper tantrums in front of another child's parents.

7. The benefits of maintaining a commitment to professionalism include
    a. ___ attending meetings.
    b. ___ helping you feel competent and effective.
    c. ___ changing your profession.
    d. ___ finding out that you have been doing everything wrong.

8. An example of unprofessional behavior is
    a. ___ arriving at work every day on time.
    b. ___ having all children do the same activities or following the same schedule.
    c. ___ completing an accident report immediately after an accident.
    d. ___ giving clear directions that show respect for children.

True or False. Write *T* if the statement is true. Write *F* if the statement is false. Then, for each statement that is false, rewrite it to be true.

9. ____ A professional is someone with specialized knowledge and skills.

10. ____ Working with preschool children is not a real profession.

11. ____ It is unprofessional to speak out against inappropriate program practices.

12. ____ Confidentiality related to families is only important within the program.

Competency Assessment Observation Forms

MODULE 1: SAFE[*]

Page 1

Teacher: ____________________ Observer: ____________________

Date/time: ____________________ Setting: ____________________

Observation Record: ____________________

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[*] This competency assessment must include observation of an emergency drill.

MODULE 1: SAFE (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 1: SAFE (continued)

Prior to the observation period, assess the following criteria.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Check indoor and outdoor areas daily and remove any hazardous materials.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Check daily to see that all electrical outlets are covered and electrical cords are placed away from water, traffic paths, and children's reach.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Check materials and equipment daily for broken parts, loose bolts, or jagged edges and make sure they are repaired or replaced.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Arrange the room so that there are no long or open spaces that tempt children to run and so that there are clear fire exits.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Check safety equipment monthly to ensure it is in an easy-to-reach place and in good condition.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Develop and post accident and emergency procedures.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Make sure the telephone is easy to reach and is working properly.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Know where to find parents' emergency telephone numbers.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Maintain current emergency information on all children.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Work with colleagues to supervise all children at all times.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Follow required recommended adult-child ratios of 1:8 for a group of 16 or 1:9 for a group of 18 preschoolers.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Know and follow established procedures for leading children to safety during a fire and other hazard drills and in real emergencies.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Respond quickly and calmly to children in distress.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Take safety precautions in a calm and reassuring manner without overprotecting children to make them fearful.
[ ]met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Convey to children in actions and words that the program is a safe place and that they will be protected.
[ ]met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 1: SAFE (continued)

The Competent Teacher Will:

Involve children in making safety rules for indoor and outdoor equipment, materials, and activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Remind children of safety rules and emergency procedures using diagrams, pictures, and words.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Demonstrate proper ways to use potentially dangerous materials and equipment.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Teach children how to observe safety rules when taking neighborhood walks and field trips.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Use positive guidance techniques to respond immediately when children are involved in unsafe activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Point out potential hazards so children will learn how to prevent accidents.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 2: HEALTHY Page 1

Teacher: ____________________ **Observer:** ____________________

Date/time: ____________________ **Setting:** ____________________

Observation Record: ____________________

MODULE 2: HEALTHY (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 2: HEALTHY (continued)

Prior to the observation period, assess the following criteria.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Check the room daily for adequate ventilation and lighting, comfortable room temperature, and sanitary conditions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide tissues, paper towels, soap, and plastic-lined, covered waste containers in places children can reach.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Follow a flexible daily schedule that offers a balance of relaxing and vigorous indoor and outdoor activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

State the definitions and describe the signs of possible physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or maltreatment, and neglect.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

State the applicable laws and program policies related to reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to authorities without waiting for proof and maintaining confidentiality after filing a report.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Open windows or doors daily to let in fresh air if needed during observation period.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Complete daily health checks and be alert to symptoms of illnesses throughout the day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Recognize symptoms of common childhood diseases and stay in regular contact with parents.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Wash hands and make sure children wash theirs frequently using the method recommended by the Centers for Disease Control.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Clean and disinfect table surfaces before and after preparing and serving food.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to use self-help skills for toileting, handwashing, toothbrushing, and at snack and mealtimes.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Model healthy habits, such as handwashing, using tissues, eating nutritious foods, and sanitizing materials and surfaces.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Introduce health and hygiene concepts through daily routines, conversations, books, cooking activities, and visiting health professionals.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Plan and serve nutritious meals and snacks.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Sit with children, "family-style," during snack and meal times to encourage conversation and to model healthy eating habits.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children recognize when their bodies need a change—rest, some food or water, or movement.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Page 1

Teacher:

Observer:

Date/time:

Setting:

Observation Record:

MODULE 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (continued) **Page 2**

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844

MODULE 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (continued)

Prior to the observation period, assess the following criteria:

The Competent Teacher Will:

Establish a variety of well-defined and equipped indoor and outdoor interest areas that reflect children's current skills and interests.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Create soft, cozy areas where children can play alone, look at books, listen to music, or talk with a friend.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Define separate spaces, indoors and outdoors, for active and quiet play.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Adapt the environment, if necessary, to fully include children with special needs.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide sufficient storage for children's personal belongings, such as labeled cubbies or bins.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Arrange the outdoor area to support a variety of activities, such as climbing, swinging, building, running, and relaxing.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Use low, open shelves and picture labels so children can easily select materials and return them independently.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Store materials and supplies that are used together in the same place.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Convey positive messages through the environment (e.g., this is a safe place; you belong here; you can find what you need).
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Plan a schedule that includes large blocks of time when children choose what they want to do.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer a balance of activity choices including active and quiet, indoors and outdoors, and individual, small group, and large group activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Display learning materials related to current activities (for example, firefighter hats, fire engines, and books on fire fighters after a trip to the fire department).
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Include dolls, picture books, photographs, and toys that positively portray different ethnic groups and people with disabilities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 3: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (continued)

The Competent Teacher Will:

Provide a variety of materials to encourage dramatic play, construction, small muscle development, and thinking skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Plan at least two periods a day for children to play outdoors.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Allow time for children to use their self-help skills in daily routines such as hand washing and dressing to go outside.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Use daily routines to teach new skills and concepts such as classification and sequencing.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Plan something for children to do during transitions between activities so they won't be restless.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 4: PHYSICAL

Page 1

Teacher: ____________________ Observer: ____________________

Date/time: ____________________ Setting: ____________________

Observation Record: ____________________

MODULE 4: PHYSICAL (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 4: PHYSICAL (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Encourage children to use their large muscles throughout the day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Play indoor and outdoor noncompetitive games.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of large muscles.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer indoor and outdoor activities that challenge children to improve their gross motor skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide a variety of materials and equipment that encourages all children to use their large muscles.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to use their small muscles throughout the day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage the development of self-help skills that involve the use of small muscles.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer activities that challenge children to improve their fine motor skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide a variety of materials that fit togther so children can practice their fine motor skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide materials and activities that accommodate different fine motor skill levels.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to participate in daily routines.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer a variety of materials and activities that encourage children of different skill levels to be physically fit.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Schedule time for active outdoor play every day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide opportunities for indoor active play during bad weather.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to coordinate use of their large and small muscles.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children develop an awareness of rhythm so they can coordinate their body movements.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Introduce cooperative games and activities that build children's physical skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help older children begin learning skills they can use to play sports and games.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 5: COGNITIVE

Page 1

Teacher: ______________________ Observer: ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ Setting: ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

MODULE 5: COGNITIVE (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 5: COGNITIVE (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Call attention to sensory experiences as children use materials and participate in routines.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Organize and display toys and materials logically by categories and attributes.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Display materials that encourage children to make discoveries.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide materials such as plastic bottle caps, beans, buttons, and shells that invite children to sort, classify, and order.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide materials that match children's skills and interests and challenge children to extend their learning.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer open-ended materials that children with varied skills and interests can use in different ways.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer materials that encourage children to explore cause and effect and make predictions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Point out children's use of thinking skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Show children that you accept and respect their work and ideas.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Comment on children's work in a way that introduces new words and builds on their ideas.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Ask questions to help children recall and understand how past events relate to what is happening now.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Answer children's questions and help them find their own answers.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Ask questions that encourage children to think of several possible answers or solutions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Ask questions that help children think about cause and effect or make predictions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Set up activities that allow children to test out their ideas.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Plan activities that follow up on books read with the children to extend their understanding.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children apply what they have learned to new situations.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Extend children's dramatic play by providing new props or making suggestions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 5: COGNITIVE (continued)

The Competent Teacher Will:

Plan activities that allow children to use their senses to explore.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Model how to use books to learn new information.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children learn about their community by taking neighborhood walks and inviting guests to visit the program.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 6: COMMUNICATION **Page 1**

Teacher: ______________________ Observer: ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ Setting: ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

MODULE 6: COMMUNICATION (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 6: COMMUNICATION (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Accept a child's way of speaking while serving as a model for standard use of language.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to talk with one another by making suggestions or planning activities that will accommodate just a few children.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Pay close attention to children's words and actions and help them express their ideas clearly.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Make comments and ask questions that communicate interest and help children learn how to take turns in conversations.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Stop while reading a story to talk about the characters and what they are doing.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Be aware of signs of a possible speech disorder or hearing impairment, and discuss these obsevations with the child's parents.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Learn words in children's home languages to reinforce their language development.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Tape picture and word labels to containers and shelves where toys and materials are stored.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Record children's words that describe their work.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Make and post at children's eye-level signs with words.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Involve children in making books about topics or events that are important to them.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Show children how adults use reading and writing to learn to do a task.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Create a well-lit, carpeted, library area with comfortable places to sit and books displayed so the covers face out.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Create a writing area, within or separate from the library area, stocked with reading and writing materials.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide props and dress-up clothes that support children's interests and emerging literacy skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Teach children short poems and finger plays during transitions or activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Display books, including some in children's home languages, that match children's abilities and reflect their cultures and families.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Read to children at story times and in response to requests; invite children to retell familiar stories.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage family reading and writing times by lending books and sharing donated writing supplies.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 7: CREATIVE Page 1

Teacher: ______________________ Observer: ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ Setting: ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

MODULE 7: CREATIVE (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Display and store materials on low open shelves so children can easily select and replace what they need without adult assistance.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Set up the environment so children can spread out, explore, and be messy.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide sufficient space to save creations that cannot be completed in one day so children can continue to make, use, and possibly expand them.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children display their own creative work attractively and respectfully.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Display interesting pictures and objects at a child's height on the wall and invite children to explore and enjoy them.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Adapt the schedule, when appropriate, so children's creative work is not interrupted.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide books, CDs or tapes, props, and art materials in response to children's current interests.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer a variety of materials, props, and real things that reflect the cultures and ethnic groups of all the children in the class.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to use their imaginations through activities such as storytelling.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Avoid using coloring books, product patterns, and dittos.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer "messy" open-ended activities such as water, sand and mud play, finger painting, face painting, and bubble blowing.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide materials children can use in many different ways, such as blocks, musical instruments, art supplies, and dress-up clothes.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to express their ideas and feelings.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Extend children's dramatic play by assuming a "pretend" role.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Comment on children's creative thinking.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Respect the creative process as well as the creative product.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Call attention to sensory experiences.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Ask questions that encourage children to solve problems and think about things in new ways.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Accept and value each child's unique creative expression.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 8: SELF

Page 1

Teacher: ______________________ Observer: ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ Setting: ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

876

877

MODULE 8: SELF (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 8: SELF (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Observe each child regularly to learn about individual needs, skills, abilities, interests, culture, and family experiences.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to talk about their feelings and take their concerns seriously.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Learn and use words in the home language of children whose first language is not English.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Know what each child can do and demonstrate the belief that each child is special.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer verbal and gentle nonverbal contact—a hug, a touch, a smile—to demonstrate caring feelings.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Spend individual time with each child every day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide a variety of activities and materials that encourage all children to participate. Avoid making biased remarks concerning gender, disabilities, culture, ethnic background, or any other differences.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Display pictures of their families and offer homelike materials and activities to help children feel secure.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Show by what you say and do that you respect each child.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Reinforce children's behavior when they share, cooperate, or help others.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Make sure the environment and activities reflect the cultures of all children in the group, and help children learn about and appreciate a wide variety of cultures and ethnic groups.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves, even if this takes a long time. Provide help only when asked or when a child is anxious.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Accept mistakes as a natural part of learning to do something new.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide a range of activities and materials that can be enjoyed by children with different interests, abilities, and skill levels.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 8: SELF (continued)

The Competent Teacher Will:

Help children learn how to solve their own problems.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children handle their feelings about separating from their families.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Repeat activities so children can master skills and experience success.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Consider children's individual characteristics when setting up the environment, choosing materials, and planning activiities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 9: SOCIAL

Teacher: ____________________ Observer: ____________________

Date/time: ____________________ Setting: ____________________

Observation Record: ____________________

MODULE 9: SOCIAL (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 9: SOCIAL (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Encourage children to help each other.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Include large blocks of time in the daily schedule when children can choose to play with special friends.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Model positive ways to interact with others.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children find solutions to their conflicts.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Assist children who have difficulty being accepted by the group.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Share personal feelings when appropriate.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Accept children's feelings while helping them control their actions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children understand how their peers are feeling.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

State what children seem to be feeling when they are having trouble expressing their emotions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Give children words they can use to express how they feel.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Read and discuss stories that help children deal with their feelings about difficult situations.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage children to work together during chores and routines.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Establish and maintain rules and guidelines that help children learn social skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Extend children's dramatic play by actively participating.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage cooperation rather than competition.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide a variety of props that children can use for dramatic play.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide duplicates of popular toys so children who have difficulty sharing can play together.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide materials and activities two or more children can enjoy together.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 10: GUIDANCE

Page 1

Teacher: ____________________ Observer: ____________________

Date/time: ____________________ Setting: ____________________

Observation Record: ____________________

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MODULE 10: GUIDANCE (continued)

Prior to the observation period, assess the following criteria.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Make sure there are no safety hazards.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Store toys and equipment on low, open shelves.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Involve children in making up rules for the group.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Prepare children in advance for changes.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Arrange the materials and furniture to encourage appropriate behavior.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Follow a schedule that allows children to initiate their own activities for most of the day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Allow children to experience the consequences of their actions.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Redirect children to acceptable activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children who are screaming or thrashing regain self-control.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Use simple, positive reminders to restate rules.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Know when ignoring inappropriate behavior is constructive.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Assume a firm, authoritarian role only when necessary to keep children safe.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Make it easier to share or wait for a turn.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Redirect an angry or frustrated child to a soothing activity.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Tell children their feelings are accepted, even when their actions are not acceptable.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help children understand the effects of their actions on the environment, materials, and people.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Model acceptable ways to express feelings.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Work with parents to help a child with a challenging behavior learn acceptable ways to express feelings.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 11: FAMILIES*

Teacher: ______________________ **Observer:** ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ **Setting:** ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

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* Conduct this competency assessment at drop-off or pick-up time. Interview teacher to verify competencies not readily observable.

MODULE 11: FAMILIES (continued)

Page 2

MODULE 11: FAMILIES (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Share positive and relevant information about each child's routines and activities every day.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Respond to parents' questions and concerns.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Suggest ways to coordinate and build on a child's home and program experiences.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Learn parents' names and something about them as a way to build trust.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Tailor communication strategies to meet parents' individual needs.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Hold parent-teacher conferences regularly and as needed to share information about children's progress and to plan for the future.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Encourage parents to visit the program at any time.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide opportunities for parents to make decisions about their child's routines and activities in the program.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Invite parents to share aspects of their culture.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Offer a variety of parent involvement options to accommodate different schedules, interests, and skills.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Maintain confidentiality about children and families.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Recognize when families are under stress and offer additional support.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Work with parents to develop strategies for dealing with a child's behavior.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Help parents understand what their children learn through daily routines and activities.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Use familiar terms instead of jargon when talking to parents.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Provide parents with information on child development and typical preschool behaviors.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

Notify a supervisor when it seems a parent needs professional help.
[ ] met [ ] partially met [ ] not met

MODULE 12: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT*

Page 1

Teacher: ______________________ Observer: ______________________

Date/time: ______________________ Setting: ______________________

Observation Record: ______________________

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[*] This competency assessment must include observation of a teacher's planning meeting.

MODULE 12: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (continued)

Review your records from this observation and others conducted in the last month; score each criterion of competence that you can substantiate.

The Competent Teacher Will:

Communicate with parents often to learn about a child's family life, culture, home language, and unique characteristics.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Observe each child regularly and use a recording system that is objective, accurate, and avoids labeling.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Observe children in different settings and at different times of the day.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Collect examples and photographs of work that document children's skills, interests, and progress.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Play and talk with children to learn about their interests and abilities.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Meet regularly with colleagues to plan and evaluate the program.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Use information gathered through observations to plan for individual children and the class.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Include parents in planning for their children's growth and development.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Use creative thinking skills such as brainstorming in planning and in solving problems.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Change the environment, materials, interest areas, routines, and activities to address children's individual characteristics.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Appreciate the use and strengths of all team members, including teachers, parents, and volunteers.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Review program policies and procedures before starting a new task.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Complete management tasks according to a schedule.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Use the program's system for reports and recordkeeping.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Keep informed about teachers' job responsibilities.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Share ideas and program policies and procedures with colleagues and the supervisor.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Answer parents' questions about program operations and refer them to the supervisor, if appropriate.
☐ met ☐ partially met ☐ not met

Appendix A

Planning Form for Group Training Sessions

Planning Form for Group Training Sessions

Use this form to plan a series of group sessions on a module. Tailor your plan to address individual interests and training needs.

Module:

Overview

I. Open the Session (Ask an open-ended question to encourage discussion.)

II. Discuss the Key Topics

A. Introduce the three major skills used by competent teachers.

B. Lead a discussion by posing questions that will encourage participation.

III. Review the Three Sets of Examples

For each set, ask participants to share examples of their own competent practices and discuss the short situations and their responses to the questions. Ask questions such as:

- How do you feel about the way the teacher handled this situation?
- How would you handle a similar situation in your program?

IV. Discuss the "Your Own . . . Section"

(For example, "Your Own Self-Discipline.")

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V. End the Session

Answer questions. Return completed overviews and pre-training assessments. Schedule individual meetings or phone conferences to discuss responses and the three to five skills and topics teachers' hope to learn more about.

Learning Activity ______________________________*

I. Open the Session

Begin by asking an open-ended question, reviewing the previous learning activity, or discussing a follow-up assignment from the previous meeting.

II. Discuss the Text

Lead a discussion focused on the key points presented in the learning activity.

III. Review the Activity

Ask participants to describe their experiences completing this learning activity. Encourage them to share examples from their completed activities.

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* Complete one for each learning activity in this module.

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IV. Offer Additional Resources/Activities

List any materials, audiovisual resources, topics for discussion, or exercises you will use to supplement the learning activity.

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V. End the Session

A. Give a brief overview of the next learning activity.

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B. Return completed learning activities with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

C. Remind participants of the time and place for your next session and when to submit their completed learning activities for your review and written comments.

If this is the last session for this module, discuss Summarizing Your Progress.

D. Return completed forms for summarizing your progress with your comments. Offer to review and discuss these during individual meetings or phone conferences with interested teachers.

E. Ask teachers to share one item from their summary of what they learned while working on this module.

F. Invite teachers to describe some of the ways they adapted or changed their approach to the practices addressed in this module.

G. Schedule individual meetings with teachers to review their progress and schedule the knowledge and competency assessments.

Appendix B

Answer Sheets for Knowledge Assessments

Answer Sheets for Knowledge Assessments

Each module assessment is worth 100 points total. A score of 80 points or above is needed to pass.

There are four kinds of test questions:

1. **Short answers** Explain, identify, defend why, describe, list, and so forth in response to questions. (Give five or 10 points each, depending on the number of answers needed and complexity of the exercise. Award five points for each answer per question, or 10 points if only one answer required.)
2. **Matching** Match each numbered item in the right column with the lettered item in the left column. Write the correct number on the line. (Give 5 points for each correct response.)
3. **Multiple choice** Write *X* next to the best response. (Give 5 points for each correct response.)
4. **True/ false** Write *T* if the statement is true. Write *F* if it is false. Then for each statement that is false, rewrite it to be true. (Give 2-1/2 points for each correct response.)

Module 1: Safe

Short Answers

1. Answer should reflect an understanding that keeping children safe is a priority for all people who work with children.

2. Answers may include:
   a and b. locate near source of water; store scissors with points facing down; provide sponges or towels for wiping up spills; use only nontoxic materials.
   c and d. locate area away from electrical outlets and cords; limit number of children in area at one time; provide sponges or mops for controlling spilling.
   e and f. locate near source of water; have fire extinguisher near; use work surfaces at child's level; check all appliances regularly for worn cords.

3. See safety checklist, pages 44-45 of Volume I, for possible answers.

4. Answers may vary, but should include sufficient detail to indicate that teachers respond appropriately in the emergency, keeping the children's safety a priority.

Matching

5.
a. 3
b. 2
c. 1
d. 4

Multiple Choice

6. d
7. d
8. d
9. c

Module 2: Healthy

Short Answers

1. Possible responses include: avoid fats, oils, sweets; eat foods high in fiber and starch; eat at least three servings of vegetables and two fruits daily; eat lean meat, fish or poultry; use skim or low fat milk; broil or bake foods rather than fry them; use sugar in moderation; increase daily activity.

2. Answers should include two items from the health and hygiene checklist on pages 97 and 98 of Volume I.

3. It helps children develop self-help skills; improves their fine muscle coordination; increases their cognitive skills; encourages their social skills; and teaches children about good nutrition and healthy hygiene habits.

4. Answer should state that the teachers eat with the children and that everyone at the table serves themselves and engages in conversation.

5. Answers should include:
   For a and b: any of the healthful habits in the module.

6. Answer should reflect state and local laws and the program's policies and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

Matching

7.
a. 2
b. 1
c. 3
d. 4

Multiple Choice

8. a
9. c
10. b
11. c

Module 3: Learning Environment

Short Answers

1. Environment should include a place for children's personal belongings, child-size furniture, display of children's art work, books and other materials that reflect children's background and ethnicity, toys and materials that reflect children's interests and skill levels.

2. See pages 164-165 in Volume I for examples of interest areas and children's activities.

3. Answers may vary but should include reasons why the area needs improving and examples of changes that will make it more effective.

4. Possible responses include: give children warnings; involve children in transition activities; provide clear directions; be flexible when possible; allow children enough time to do and share work; establish a signal for quiet; keep children occupied.

5. Possible responses include:
   Table Toys— puzzle rack, beads and laces, pegs and pegboards, Cuisenaire rods, sewing cards, tinker toys, pattern blocks.

   Sand and Water—plastic pitchers, measuring cups, waterproof aprons, funnels, sponges and mops, water wheel, and eye droppers.

Matching

6.
a. 4
b. 2
c. 1
d. 3

Multiple Choice

7. a
8. d
9. a
10. c

Module 4: Physical

Short Answers

1. Answers may vary but should describe how children gain self confidence as they learn to climb, jump, and master other physical skills. Feeling competent will encourage them to try new activities.

2. Answers may include:
   a. kicking, throwing, catching, striking a ball with a bat
   b. running, hopping, skipping, balancing
   c. pushing, pulling, lifting

3. Possible responses include: turning pages of book, writing, placing headsets on ears, moving felt pieces on flannel board, pressing button on tape recorder.

4. a. Answer can vary but should not contain words that point out weaknesses or make judgments. For example, "You've almost got it. How about if I give you a push and then you can use your legs to keep going."
   b. Answer can vary but should not compare the child to others. For example, "You're running faster now; you keep getting faster every week."

5. Answers should reflect one or more activities that teacher has been reluctant to try, give a reason why, and propose a plan for trying to change.

Matching

6.
a. 2
b. 1
c. 4
d. 3

Multiple Choice

7. a
8. b
9. d
10. b

Module 5: Cognitive

Short Answers

1. Possible responses include: be patient; accept and respect children's responses; allow time for children to think; model problem-solving; encourage multiple solutions; offer help a little at a time; provide open-ended materials and toys.

2. Possible responses include:
   a. sorting and grouping
   b. putting things in order
   c. figuring out why things happen

3. Possible responses include:
   a. explore the physical properties of objects and materials
   b. pretend to be someone else and make believe about a situation
   c. use materials to create a representation of something

4. Answers should include interest area, three materials for that area, and reasons why the materials promote cognitive development.

5. Possible responses include: buckets and shovels, funnels, ladles, measuring cups and spoons, pebbles, sifter, straw, string, sponges, eye dropper, strainer, soap, bubble materials. Teachers can guide children to talk about what they are doing; do things in order; pour and measure (compare), and classify.

Matching

6.
a. 4
b. 1
c. 2
d. 3

Multiple Choice

7. a
8. c
9. b
10. b

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Module 6: Communication

Short Answers

1. Possible responses include: set up interest areas where children can work and play together; offer interesting materials; provide dramatic play props; plan small group projects; take trips and walks in the neighborhood; eat family-style meals.

2. Answer should include methods of observation and assessment and specific ways teacher promotes skills.

3. Possible responses include: start or join a conversation by saying something to another person and wait for a response; take turns speaking when the other person has finished; look and listen to the person speaking; ask if you don't understand what someone has said; let the other person know that you are leaving the conversation.

4. Possible responses include: talk to children about how things feel, taste and smell; ask open-ended questions; name things; use full and complete sentences that describe details; take time to talk about feelings; describe the specific characteristics of objects or actions.

5. An appropriate book would have a simple plot, colorful illustrations, lots of repetition, rhymes, and/or nonsense words.

6. An appropriate book would have an imaginative story, colorful, detailed illustrations, a plot children can follow, humorous characters and events, and/or a story that extends children's understanding of the world around them.

Matching

7.
a. 2
b. 4
c. 3
d. 1

Multiple Choice

8. a
9. c
10. b
11. c

Module 7: Creativity

Short Answers

1. Answers may vary but should include: trying things and doing things in new ways; exploring , experimenting, and doing open-ended activities; and using different materials.

2. Answer should describe a specific activity with music and movement and provide sufficient detail on how it promotes creativity.

3. Possible responses include: paint, fingerpaint, playdough, building materials, clay, paste or glue, fabrics, scissors, sponge rollers, crayons.

4. Answer should include description of what was done and why it was creative.

5. Possible responses include: drums, cymbals, kazoos, hand bells, clackers, triangles, tambourines, xylophones, maracas.

Matching

6.
a. 2
b. 1
c. 4
d. 3

Multiple Choice

7. d
8. c
9. d
10. c

Module 8: Self

Short Answers

1. Answers may vary but should include sense of worth and self-confidence. These characteristics are necessary in school and in life.

2. Possible responses include: communicate frequently with children's families; observe children regularly; ask colleagues or trainer to observe children; note the kinds of activities children like; get to know your own style and preferences.

3. Answers may vary but should include something about materials, furniture, the daily schedule, and activities reflecting children's interests and abilities and making children feel included.

4. Possible responses include: talk with children about their parents during the day; listen to children as they express their feelings; make the environment as home-like as possible; encourage children to participate in activities to gain sense of competence and independence; involve children in daily routines and activities.

5. Possible responses include:
   a. listening carefully to determine what the child is saying
   b. responding so the child knows he or she is understood and respected

6. Answers may vary but should give specific examples that show how their own self-esteem affects the relationships with children in the program.

Matching

7.
a. 3
b. 4
c. 2
d. 1

Multiple Choice

8. c
9. c
10. b
11. b

Module 9: Social

Short Answers

1. Possible responses include: observe; establish a connection with the child; help children find good friends; organize small group activities in which the child can become involved; offer assistance only when necessary; know the interests of the child and build activities around those interests.

2. Possible responses include: help the child understand the consequences of his or her actions; redirect the child's anger; help the child develop ways to achieve goals without aggression; spend time alone with the child after he or she no longer exhibits aggressive behavior.

3. Possible responses include: show empathy; show generosity; help others; plan group activities that emphasize cooperation; help children learn how to talk about their feelings; read books on friendship and helpfulness.

4. Answers should give details on how the program supports children's social development.

5. Possible responses include: refer to children in their role names; model playful behaviors yourself; reinforce positive social behaviors as you observe them; help children get started, then step back; remind children of classroom rules within the context of play; engage them in conversation.

Matching

6.

a. 2
b. 1
c. 3
d. 4

Multiple Choice

7. b
8. c
9. d
10. c

Module 10: Guidance

Short Answers

1. Punishment is controlling children's behavior through fear or retaliation; discipline is guiding and directing children toward acceptable behavior. Discipline is positive in its effect; punishment does not lead to changes in behavior.

2. Possible responses include:
   a. "Do you need help putting your coat on? I'll show you a quick way to try."
   b. "Your mother will be here soon, just as she does every day around this time. Get your things so you'll be ready when she comes."

3. Possible responses include: reinforce children's positive behaviors; help children solve their own problems; anticipate problems and plan ways to avoid them; tell children what they can do; be polite to children; encourage children to move when they are restless; respond to behavior without labeling child.

4. Possible responses include: does the child have a medical or physical condition? Is the child getting enough attention? Is the child bored or understimulated? Is the child frustrated or discouraged? Did I give the child enough instruction on what is expected?

5. Answers may vary but should include details of the behavior and list specific details of how teacher responded.

Matching

6.

a. 3
b. 4
c. 2
d. 1

Multiple Choice

7. c
8. b
9. c
10. d

Module 11: Families

Short Answers

1. Possible responses include: health and growth history; temperament; interest; abilities; relationships with other family members; favorite activities at home; food preferences and allergies; reactions to certain situations; how best comforted.

2. Possible responses include: favorite interest areas and materials; what the child does at the program during the day; what challenges and kinds of activities the child enjoys; how the child reacts to changes in the environment; the child's social abilities at the program; teacher observations of the child's cognitive abilities and progress.

3. Answers should include description of what teacher finds rewarding and give reason(s) why.

4. Possible responses include: message box or folder for parents, parent bulletin board, newsletter, parent handbook, family journals, family photo board, weekly notes to parents.

5. Possible responses include: having parent orientations, family dinners, or family movie nights; holding weekend or evening workshops or seminars for parents; sending home a wish list for classroom materials; inviting parents to be book reviewers; establishing a parent corner.

6. Possible responses include:
   a. ask parents about convenient days and times to meet; let parents know purpose of conference; ask parents to think of questions they may have and topics they would like to discuss; review and organize observation notes; ask colleagues to share information; collect samples of children's work; complete a planning form; role-play with a colleague to practice.
   b. establish a relaxed and comfortable tone; explain how conference will proceed; provide opportunities for parents to ask questions and provide input; discuss all areas of child development; listen carefully and pay attention to parent's reactions; begin and end with positive statement about your relationship with child.

Multiple Choice

7. c
8. c
9. c
10. a

True/False

11. T
12. F-Teachers should always ask parents about their children's interests.
13. F-Both parents and teachers know a lot about a child.
14. T

Module 12: Program Management

Short Answers

1. Answers should include specific policies or procedures followed, such as recording daily attendance, meeting and greeting parents as they arrive.

2. Possible responses include: determine children's interests, strengths, and needs; plan an individualized program; document a child's progress; address a challenging behavior; report children's progress to parents and specialists; evaluate the program.

3. A portfolio, which consists of a child's work samples, provides concrete evidence of what a child can do. It also gives a balanced picture of a child's development.

4. See page 273 of Volume II for specific strategies.

5. Possible responses include: group time activities, small group activities, outdoor activities, changes to the environment, long-term studies.

6. Possible responses include: fine motor skills, gross motor skills, self-help skills, social skills, creativity, problem-solving skills, cooperative play, self-discipline, self-confidence, literacy skills.

Multiple Choice

7. b
8. c
9. c
10. c
11. b

True /False

12. F-It is best for several people to observe a child to confirm accuracy.
13. T
14. F-Planning is crucial to individualizing.
15. F-Evaluation is the last step in the planning process.
16. T
17. F-It is necessary to work as a team when planning a program so that everyone has the same goals and objectives.

Module 13: Professionalism

Short Answers

1. A professional is a person who uses specialized knowledge and skills to do a job or provide a service. Most will consider themselves professionals because their work requires specific knowledge and skills.

2. Answers should state that there is always new information to be learned, it is affirming, and it renews interest in the profession.

3. Possible responses include: join professional organizations; read books and articles; attend workshops and conferences;, keep a journal; use the Internet; network with colleagues.

4. Answers should reflect content of module.

Multiple Choice

5. a
6. c
7. b
8. b

True/False

9 T
10. F-Working with preschool children is a real profession.
11. F-It is a teacher's professional responsibility to speak out against inappropriate program practices.
12. F-Maintaining confidentiality about families extends beyond the program.

Appendix C

Tracking Forms

Individual Tracking Form

Name: ______________________________

Indicate Date Completed

Module	Over-view	Pre-Training Assess-ment	L.A. I	L.A. II	L.A. III	L.A. IV	L.A. V	L.A. VI	Know-ledge Assess-ment	Compe-tency Assess-ment	Trainer Sign-off
Orientation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
1. Safe								X			
2. Healthy											
3. Learning Environment											
4. Physical								X			
5. Cognitive											
6. Communication								X			
7. Creative								X			
8. Self								X			
9. Social								X			
10. Guidance											
11. Families								X			
12. Program Management								X			
13. Professionalism								X		X	

Program Tracking Form

	Modules																											
	OR		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13	
Teachers	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C	B	C

Legend

B-Begun
C-Completed

Modules:

OR-Orientation
1-Safe
2-Healthy
3-Learning Environfment
4-Physical
5-Cognitive
6-Communication
7-Creative
8-Self
9-Social
10-Guidance
11-Families
12-Program Management
13-Professionalism

Appendix D

Training Record

Training Record

Name: ______________________ Program: ______________________

Topic	Date(s)	Hours	Type of Training (conference, course, workshop, observation/feedback)	Agency Providing Training	Signature of Trainer

Appendix E

Certificate of Completion

930

CERTIFICATE of COMPLETION

AWARDED TO

____

for completion of ______ hours of training

on ***Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Edition***

________________________ 199_____

Verification of Training may be obtained from:

Agency Sponsoring Training: ____________________________

Sponsor's Address: ____________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________

Sponsor's Phone Number: (   ) ____________________________

____

(Trainer's Signature)

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Appendix F

Publishers and Distributors of Resources

Publishers and Distributors of Resources

The Orientation to *Caring for Preschool Children* includes a bibliography of recommended resources for early childhood professionals. Publishers and distributors of these resources are listed below.

American Public Health Association
1015 Fifteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-789-5600

American Academy of Pediatrics
141 Northwest Point Boulevard
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009
847-228-5005

Bantam Books
201 E. 50th Street
New York, NY 10022
212-751-2600

Bright Ring Publishing
P. O. Box 31338
Bellingham, WA 98228
206-734-1601

Centers for Disease Control
1600 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30333
404-639-3311

Crown Publishers
201 East 50th St.
New York, NY 10022
212-751-2600

David S. Lake Publishers
2113 Creekwood Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525
303-224-4845

Delmar Publishers, Inc.
P. O. Box 15015
Albany, NY 12205-5015
518-464-3500
800-347-7707

DMC Publications
2113 Creekwood Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525
303-224-4845

Dolphin Books
Doubleday and Company
1540 Broadway
New York, NY 10036-4094
212-782-8200

Early Educators Press
P. O. Box 1177
Lake Alfred, FL 33850
813-956-1569

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801-4897
800-583-4135

Exchange Press, Inc.
P. O. Box 2890
Redmond, WA 98073
206-883-9394

The Free Press
866 3rd Avenue
New York, NY 10022
212-702-2000

Glencoe Macmilllan/McGraw-Hill
936 Eastwind Drive
Westerville, OH 43081-3374
614-890-1111
800-848-1567

Gryphon House, Inc.
P. O. Box 207
Beltsville, MD 20704-0207
301-595-9500
800-638-0928

High/Scope Press
600 North River St.
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
313-485-2000

The Hanen Centre
252 Bloor Street West, Room 390
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V5
416-921-1073

International Reading Association
800 Barksdale Road
P. O. Box 8139
Newark, DE 19714
302-731-1600

Little, Brown and Company
1271 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020
212-522-8700
800-759-0l90

National Association for the Education of Young Children
1509 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1426
202-232-8777
800-424-2460

R & E Research Associates
468 Auzerais Avenue, Suite A
San Jose, CA 95126
408-977-0691

Redleaf Press
450 North Syndicate, Suite 5
St. Paul, MN 55104-9951
612-641-0305
800-423-8309

Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA)
P. O. Box 56130
Little Rock, AK 72215-6130
501-663-0353

Syracuse University Press
Syracuse, NY 13210
315-433-2597

Teachers College Press
Teachers College
Columbia University
New York, NY 10027
800-575-6566

Teaching Strategies, Inc.
P. O. Box 42243
Washington, DC 20015
202-362-7543
800-637-3652

TelShare Publishing Company, Inc.
24 Breakwater Drive
Chelsea, MA 02150
617-834-8774
800-343-9707

Turn-the-Page Press
203 Baldwin Avenue
Roseville, CA 95678
916-786-8756

Williamson Publishing
Church Hill Road, P. O. Box 185
Charlotte, VT 05445
802-425-2102
800-234-8791

NOTES

Teaching Strategies, Inc., strives to improve the quality of early childhood programs by producing comprehensive and practical curriculum and training materials. Our products and staff development services are making a difference in elementary schools, Head Start, and in child care programs worldwide.

Curriculum Resources

***The Creative Curriculum® for Early Childhood,* 3rd Ed.** Shows how teachers build curriculum for preschool and kindergarten children around the environment using ten interest areas: Blocks, House Corner, Table Toys, Art, Sand and Water, Library, Music and Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors. #PSTG0071, $39.95. *Now available in Spanish*—#PSTG074, $39.95

***A Guide for Supervisors and Trainers on Implementing The Creative Curriculum® for Early Childhood,* 3rd Ed.** Includes supervision strategies, workshop outlines, self-assessment and observation forms, and handouts for training sessions. #PSTG0073, $29.95

The Creative Curriculum®. A 37-minute, award-winning videotape that shows how children learn in each interest area and how teachers set the stage and encourage their learning. #PSTGC0072, $99.50. *Now available with Spanish subtitles*—#PSTG0014, $99.50

A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Education. Also available in Spanish and Chinese. Explains what happens in a developmentally appropriate early childhood program and the important role parents play in helping their children succeed in school and in life. #PSTG0075, $22.50 (set of 10)

The NEW Room Arrangement as a Teaching Strategy. A 15-minute slide/videotape. Presents concrete ideas for arranging early childhood classrooms to support positive behavior and learning. #PSTG0076, $35.00. *Now available in Spanish*—#PSTG0010, $35.00

Observing Young Children: Learning to Look, Looking to Learn. This 30-minute videotape illustrates how staff can use ongoing observation to learn about each child, measure children's progress, and evaluate their program. #PSTG0054, $55.00

Constructing Curriculum for the Primary Grades. Combines all of the elements for planning a successful primary grade curriculum. Six strategies for implementing curriculum provide the framework for teaching five subject areas. #PSTG0077, $39.95

Competency-Based Training Materials

The "***Caring for . . .***" series:

Caring for Infants and Toddlers
Caring for Preschool Children, 2nd Ed.
Caring for Children in Family Child Care
Caring for Children in School-Age Programs

Each of the four sets in the "***Caring for . . .***" series is comprised of 13 modules in two volumes which correspond to the Child Development Associate (CDA) functional areas. Volume I covers Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment (Program Environment in the School-Age set), Physical, Cognitive, and Communication. Volume II includes Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families, Program Management, and Professionalism.

Trainer's Guides. Each of the "***Caring for . . .***" sets has a *Trainer's Guide* that offers suggestions for implementing the program and providing feedback to staff. They include knowledge and competency assessments, and forms for planning, observing, and tracking progress.

For more information, call (800) 637-3652 or (202) 362-7543, or write P.O. Box 42243, Washington, DC, 20015.

A Trainer's Guide

Caring for Preschool Children, Second Edition

"Over the past five years, I have supervised thirty-eight CDA candidates using Caring for Preschool Children. *All these candidates earned their CDA credentials.* Caring for Preschool Children *is simply the best resource I have found. Everything you need is in one place—I don't have to search for other training aids."*

Anne Bailey
Education & CDA Coordinator
Racine/Kenosha Community Action Agency
Racine, Wisconsin

Caring for Preschool Children is a personalized, easy-to-use, low-cost approach to staff development. Its learning activities teach practical skills that can be applied immediately in the classroom setting. The two-volume set of materials includes readings and worksheets that become each teacher's personal resource for working with preschool children. The material covers 13 modules corresponding to each of the Functional Areas of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards. The training program is self-instructional so that teachers can complete it at their own pace, as time permits, and they can study the modules in whatever order they prefer. The modules for **Volume I** are: Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment, Physical, Cognitive, and Communication. The modules for **Volume II** are: Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families, Program Management, and Professionalism.

A Trainer's Guide to Caring for Preschool Children is an essential resource to help trainers and center directors implement the training program. It provides a detailed description of the trainer's role in guiding teachers through each of the learning activities. It offers many useful tips for trainers, including suggestions for providing feedback and encouraging teachers to extend their learning. It contains knowledge assessements for each module to help trainers determine if a teacher has understood the material and has become more competent in working with children. **The Guide** also includes answer sheets and observation forms for the assessment process, and tracking forms to record each teacher's progress through the 13 modules.

Teaching Strategies, Inc., was established in 1988. We believe that the future depends on our ability to nurture the optimal growth and development of every child. High quality early childhood programs develop strong partnerships with families to build the foundation children need to become enthusiastic life-long learners and to succeed in school and in life. The mission of Teaching Strategies is to enhance the quality of early childhood programs by developing and offering practical, developmentally appropriate products and staff development services.

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